



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3433 07484633 2

THE BLACK MANTLE

JLTON COLVILLE

Fiction, American



!

7

Fiction, American



1

27

...





THE BLACK MANTLE



THE
BLACK MANTLE

A NOVEL

BY
FULTON COLVILLE

NEW YORK
THE COSMOPOLITAN PRESS
1911

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
976649A

ACTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
2 1993 L

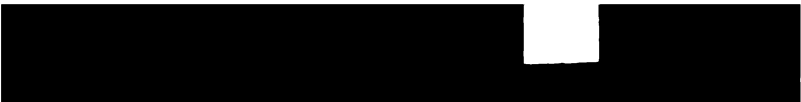
COPYRIGHT, 1911, BY
FULTON COLVILLE



THE BLACK MANTLE

WQR 19 FEB '36





THE BLACK MANTLE

CHAPTER I

Propinquity is the sunshine of love. Its rays had been steadily pouring upon the hearts of Miss Marbury and Andy Whitfield for weeks—ever since they met at Saratoga. The only shadow that came between them arose from their debates upon the habits and customs of their respective sections—she was from Boston, he from Atlanta—for both were somewhat Chauvinistic, a trait not unusual in the people of either New England or the South. But these discussions may have been, after all, like sudden showers to budding life,—dampened only to stimulate growth; for it was very evident they were extremely considerate of each other, and exhibited an ill-at-ease feeling when separated. This was observed with delight by Major Sims, who was a friend in common to both, and was doing all he could to make a match between them. He lived in Atlanta and was a neighbor and comrade of Andy; indeed, had induced Andy to go to Saratoga with him. The Major's interest in Miss Marbury arose from the fact that he and her father had been close friends at Harvard, and later had met upon the battlefield during the Civil War. At the Second Battle of Manassas the Major had captured Marbury, and paroled him without authority, for which, after the

war's close Captain Marbury had requited the Major's kindness in many ways. Now that the Captain was dead, the Major felt a peculiar interest in his old friend's daughter, and wishing her not to pass out of his life, he hoped she would become the wife of his now dearest friend and neighbor, Andy Whitfield. Not possessing that feminine tact in match-making, and having no closets in his nature for secrets of his own, he at once communicated his wishes to the young people. Nor did he stop at this: forgetting that love-making is not a race-track, but a winding mountain path where speed falls behind the soft tread that fears its footing, he continually urged them on. Neither Andy nor Miss Marbury was what might be called old, yet both were out of that zone of life where fancy is continually on the wing. She was twenty-eight, he thirty-three. That age in man is not sufficient to have him on the lookout for a wife,—it requires a widower, or one not less than fifty to do that,—while, of course, she was not on the hunt for a husband—no woman ever was. Never.

One morning as she and Andy were about to mount their horses for a canter,—they did this every day now,—the Major took Andy aside and whispered:

"Let all discussions alone; they are a bore, anyway. No man ever enjoyed debating a subject with a woman, particularly with the woman he loves. Love is the only theme, stick to that."

Andy smiled quizzically. He recalled the debates between himself and Miss Marbury on such

questions as the tariff, secession, reconstruction, the war. They had been interesting—very, except for the sectional turn now and then taken. But the debaters had never lost their tempers, although the negro problem had evoked briar-like words every time they had taken it up. Yet as it was uppermost in Miss Marbury's mind as the great question of the day, like Banquo's ghost, it would not down. Her people had believed that the negro was badly treated in slavery days, and had fought for his freedom, and now she thought that he was unjustly dealt with in social ways, and desired a change.

On this day's ride, as usual, the question had again arisen. Riding slowly side by side, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye, Andy had said to her:

"The North has never understood the negro, and likely never will. You people look upon him as a white man with dark skin, when he is no more than an Indian is a negro with red skin."

Miss Marbury did not care for the criticism, and replied rather tartly:

"It may be that we of the North do not understand the negro, but I don't think that is the trouble. Like all people who ever held others in bondage, you are not willing to recognize any merit in him. The Egyptians never could see any good in the Hebrews, and you Southerners will never give the negro his deserts or recognize his worth."

At this Andy merely laughed quietly, not caring to renew the debate on this vexing question. She

understood and, giving her head a slight toss and arching her brows, said no more.

Coming to a fork in the road, Andy looked at her to ask which they should take,—they had traversed every one around Saratoga,—and were now selecting those they liked best. Striking her horse, she took the left in a spirited canter, and he followed. Reaching a point that had suggested a comparison between the battles of the Revolution fought North and those fought South, they glanced at each other, as by telepathy, and, smiling in silence, pressed on. Upon a field to her right she observed horses and cattle browsing, and turning to him, asked:

“Have you ever been upon the blue-grass farms of Kentucky, where the great racers are bred?”

“Oh, yes!” replied he, “I have been upon them;” and, after a moment’s reflection, continued: “I have always thought I would like to live there and raise horses. Nothing appeals to me more than that.” A quizzical smile overspread her intense features,—as responsive to thought as the cords of a piano to sound,—for she considered his speech an indication of his love for pleasure instead of a desire for labor and the accumulation of money, and now asked wonderingly:

“Is such a business profitable?”

“I have never heard of one of them becoming a millionaire,” said he, smiling at her question, “but they make all the money they need, and their lives are spent very delightfully.”

“You are a typical Southerner, Mr. Whitfield;

for every idea of yours is agreeableness of life, not financial success."

He did not look at her, but smiled as he thought of what he considered the Yankee trait—money-making—showing itself in her character. Finally, he cast his dark, merry eyes toward her and jocularly replied:

"No, money-making does not appeal to me, for I have no desire for great riches. I much prefer to spend my life enjoying my work, and in the company of my friends, than to be continually harassed with the idea that I must accumulate a fortune." Brought up in the whirl of a business center, and in a section where industry, frugality, and wonderful ingenuity had characterized the people for centuries, she looked upon any but a strenuous life as indicative of inertness. Nevertheless she mused: "Isn't the Southern way of living the true one? It certainly brings contentment and, I suppose, also happiness." Turning that bright face, wherein strength and beauty were combined like the red and white in a rose, she smiled coyly, as she remarked:

"I suppose in a community where that feeling is prevalent life must be very attractive indeed?"

"Yes, it is; and we at the South get infinitely more out of life than those who spend their time in a continual grind after money. We are more like our English ancestor than any other section in the country; and, as for myself, I never care to change, nor do I wish my people to. The race for wealth is belittling, and produces not men, but money-making machines."

Her brows arched slightly as she replied:

"I'm going South sometime to see how you people live. I think it must be rather interesting."

Andy's heart fluttered at this speech, and his eyes sought hers quickly to catch her meaning. Was Priscilla asking John to speak? She observed the questioning glance and, realizing its meaning, crimson spots appeared in her cheeks. Like all women, she desired her lover to declare himself, yet dreaded the scene; and now striking her horse she dashed away with a slight chuckle. He smiled as he thought he read her meaning, and at once pursued.

He was in love with her, and wanted to ask her to be his wife, yet he had some misgivings about it. She was from New England, a section and a people which from the birth of the nation had been antagonistic to his; their customs and habits were different, as well as the viewpoints of life. He feared she might feel out of place in his home and be unhappy. Then, there was the question of how she and his sister Dorothy would get along. He was devoted to his sister, who had been left to his care since the death of their parents. He had thought he would never marry until she had chosen a mate and flown to her own nest. The fact is, he had run many times from other women who had pleased his fancy, but now it was different—the subtle chain held him a willing prisoner. Again and again he had been on the point of speaking to Miss Marbury, but had allowed some trifle to interfere. The crimson spots aroused him: now was the time to tell her he loved her, and ask her to be his wife.

She was some distance ahead,—out of the firing line—and smiled over what she realized was coming; indeed, what she had waited for. “Shall I accept him?” was the query she put to herself; and tossing her head declined to answer it, even to her own consciousness. This might seem singular, for she was matter of fact to a degree that at times struck Andy, as being queer. Like Priscilla of old, she could have inquired, without a quiver, whether or not he intended to ask her to be his wife. Yet she was not lacking in gentleness, and the light of refinement gave a steady glow to her strong face. A product of old Puritan blood and Puritan environment, she was positive and direct; shadows with her ceased with night and all things stood forth in the light of reason. Upon the death of her parents she had gone out into the world to make her own life, although opposed by her brother and certain relatives who were very wealthy and proud. But she would have her own way and be independent. Entering a female academy as teacher, she proceeded along a primrose path, never so much as touching a briar with the hem of her garments. Yet notwithstanding the rigor of her conduct and the exacting requirements placed upon her by blood and tradition, time failed to lessen her charms or reduce the strain of coquetry that marks every attractive woman.

In personal attributes Miss Marbury and Andy Whitfield differed, as well as in mental traits. He was medium in height and very dark, even swarthy, with keen black eyes, constantly dancing with

humor. A thin, intellectual face, marked by its thoughtful cast, denoted a philosophic nature and one given more to reflection than exertion. He would be looked upon as that typical Southerner who is supposed never to be in a hurry. In fact, he illustrated the speech of the successful old gentleman who declared: "More good things have overtaken me than I ever overtook."

She was tall and so fair that she reminded one of a lily. Her hair was saved from being white by a slight yellow sheen that pervaded it. Her eyes were light gray, resembled that queer gem, the cat's-eye, in opalescent blending of fire and color. Her nose was almost Grecian in its straightness; and her face, rather long, ended in a beautiful chiseled chin wherein decision of character was manifested. Her lips were a trifle thin, yet cupid's bow was perfect. Her intense face indicated an emotional nature, but her reasoning power was so strong and her purpose so fixed that this side of her character was seldom displayed. It was from natures like hers that reformers, martyrs, and that great line of forerunners in the march of time have come. Her dignity of bearing, as well as her very striking appearance, had so aroused Major Sims the first time he presented Andy that he called out enthusiastically to him:

"Look, look! What a superb woman! By ganny, I have always maintained that distinguished appearance surpassed beauty in chaining one's attention! Such fortunate creatures represent perfection in our kind, and we naturally make out obedience when we meet them."

As Andy cantered along behind her he recalled this exclamation of the Major's, and felt a thrill of happiness. She was to be his wife. Those crimson spots that had appeared in her face meant that. He pressed his horse forward, determined to speak then and there. She had now reined in her spirited animal and sat erect, waiting. Andy, in his pursuit, wondered just how to approach the subject—whether directly or in a round-about way. Before he could settle this all-important problem however, they suddenly came into full view of one of those beautiful little valleys that snugly nestle between the rolling hills like a quail upon her nest. She stopped instantly and, looking at the pictures made by the shadows upon the dark woods, recited those lines of Whittier:

"Touched by a light that hath no name,
A glory never sung,
Aloft on sky and mountain wall,
Are God's great pictures hung."

As her lips softly closed upon the last word those wonderful eyes again flashed upon Andy. There seemed to be a question mark behind the look. Andy's heart pounded furiously and that swarthy face felt a rushing flow of blood, but he could not speak, except with his eyes. They told the story. A roguish smile mounted her lips, and again she was away, but not in so rapid a pace as before. Andy struck his horse viciously, and the old animal bounded away indignantly, being unwilling even to stop when he reached his comrade who proudly bore

his fair rider. Andy jerked this unsympathetic beast and stopped him suddenly; but he was not to begin his speech, not yet, for she turned to him and said vivaciously:

"Do you confess that a true love of the beautiful could supplant religion?"

Andy did not so confess, but desired no argument. Not so with her. She sought verbal contention, and the war of wits lasted until they came in sight of the town. With suppressed impatience he noted this, as his opportunity, for the time being at least, was gone. Here, turning to him with a bewitching smile, she asked:

"How is it we agree in our views of life and conduct upon nearly all subjects except the big general questions like religion, politics, and the like?"

It was in his mind to say: "I hope we agree upon the biggest of all,—love," but hesitated at the sight of an approaching horseman, and was lost. She laughed gently, but in a tone of raillery, as she continued:

"But, after all, those matters are not vital to companionship. They rather add variety to converse."

The horseman had passed, and now there was another opening, but somehow Andy's tongue or his courage failed him. He cleared his throat and stammered, only to agree with a nod of his head. She realized they were still near the danger line and, giving him a roguish glance, darted off once more. He followed wondering what she meant.

CHAPTER II

Upon reaching the hotel the Major and Mrs. Martin—Miss Marbury's chaperon—met them. The Major was overjoyed, for Mrs. Martin was as prim as a starched night-cap and bored him. He loved youth and gayety, and ran from age and the conventional as from a plague. As soon as he and Andy were alone he, with eagerness, asked:

"Did you make love to her to-day?" Andy's answer was a grum, "No." He felt that he had had an opportunity and had let it slip.

"Come, come!" exclaimed the Major. "You are making a mistake. She's the woman for you. Married to her you would feel an enthusiasm in life that would make you a judge in two years—and a judge you must be. It would just suit you. Then, there's nothing like a title—it is so easy to call a man Judge or Colonel. The truth is, if the lexicographers or some others of high-sounding names do not invent a word for us similar to the French *monsieur*, or the Spanish *señor*, to designate that little distinction you wish to confer upon one at times in addressing him, I shall stick to the Southern custom of calling one Colonel. Mister signifies nothing. I don't know but that Colonel is as good as any term we could get; it puts one at the head of the regiment. We could by law give the military officer some other title, and thus arrange all to our satisfaction. Yes, I'm for Colonel. But to your matter—"

Andy interrupted by a wave of his hand and a smile, but it was for no purpose. The Major continued:

"Come! If you fail to marry her you will likely never marry, which will be a great mistake. In fact, ever man should marry, for man's like the turtle, both require an incentive to action. The turtle must have a coal of fire upon his back, while a man needs a family upon his." Andy smiled drolly at this comparison, but remained silent. He was not in a humor to be teased, for he was dissatisfied with himself. But the Major was not to be put aside lightly. Taking hold of Andy's coat that he might have him fast, he asked seriously:

"Aren't you going to address her before you leave?" In desperation Andy now replied:

"That depends upon her. So far, I can't see that she's ready for me to do so."

"That's not the way to win a woman. Press her, press her. Do as Tom Moore said: 'Lie to her.'" Again Andy shook his head, and replied dolefully enough:

"I don't believe in pressing this matter. I want a woman as anxious to marry me as I am to marry her. I want reciprocal love-making." The Major slapped him on the shoulder and shouted in derision:

"Bah! Your love-making will be a simple proposition of marriage. Whoever wooed a woman that way? Why, a woman desires an ardent pursuit; no woman surrenders without it—no attractive one."

The Major was what is usually termed a typical gentleman of the "old school." He had long since

passed the meridian of life, being nearly seventy, and his locks were white and his figure had taken on the rotundness of that age. Notwithstanding this, however, he still possessed the air, manner, and mental agility of middle life.

Not getting any satisfaction out of Andy, Major found an occasion later to lead Miss Marbury to a secluded nook. Here he began a conversation with her upon his pet subject, and did it in his usual straightforward manner:

"Martha, are you going to marry Andy?"

The suddenness of the question startled her; and after hesitating a moment she said very calmly:

"He has not asked me to marry him."

"No, maybe not; but he's in love with you, and although a man past youth, and accustomed to the company of women, he's still shy; you must encourage him." At this she laughed gayly and then asked:

"What do you mean by encouraging him?"

"Tut! Tut! A woman ask that? Why, every woman knows what encouragement is; for every single one of you has practiced it since girlhood."

"There you are mistaken. I never did—never had a love affair in my life." Then laughing a moment, continued, "Maybe that is the reason I have not."

Ignoring this speech, the Major pursued his theme:

"You and Andy will just suit, for in certain particulars you are so much alike and in others so different. He has never had a serious love affair, and

you are both so practical." Breaking into a jovial laugh he continued: "I would like to hear him make love to you. I think it would be in the nature of a contract; and if you accepted him it would be something like party of the second part hereby agrees to accept party of the first part as a husband."

"Do you think I would like the South?" asked she abruptly, showing what was uppermost in her mind.

"Be delighted with it. At first it would appear a little strange, but in a very short time you would be charmed with the gentle flowing way in which the people live. There there is no struggle for social supremacy or anything of that sort. You are known, and the career of your people before you; you take the place that you were born in, and life ripples along like a gentle stream. There is no distinction between the rich and the poor, and if one cannot give as expensive a dinner as another it makes the hospitality at his house no less delightful. It is the people more than how they entertain that constitutes social success."

"Life must be very pleasant there," responded she thoughtfully.

"It is, yes, and I want you to live there. Your father and I, as you know, were very close friends at Harvard, and I feel very close to you, and—" Interrupting himself suddenly, he looked at her and continued: "Did he ever tell you of the time I captured him in the Civil War at Bristoe's Station?"

"Yes, yes, of course he did. It was kind in you to let him go."

"But I didn't let him go; the fact is, I had no

control over it. We were pressed to save ourselves and had no way of taking care of prisoners."

"Anyway, he always attributed his release to you, and felt very grateful."

"Did he ever tell you of how he aided me after the war in securing a position?" questioned the Major, as he stroked her hand.

"No, I do not recall that; what was it?"

"Well, after the war was over there was nothing to do at home. I had lived upon the plantation with my father, and now it was gone, not even a fence was standing. The stock had all been taken by Sherman, leaving one old mare, one cow, and one old hen. I determined to go to New York and secure the agency of a life insurance company, and with just enough money to pay my fare I started. I found many brother officers of the Confederacy there hunting a job; all wore slick old clothes and presented a shabby genteel appearance. I sought the agency of a New York life insurance company, but could not get a hearing. Finally one day who should I run upon at the hotel but your father? He was in New York to consult with the board of directors of this New York life insurance company, as he represented it in Boston. Through him I secured an audience with the president of the company. After conferring for some time the president finally asked:

"'Well, who are you, Major, that we should entrust with this business?' Beside Jack Marbury's recommendation, I had nothing except a letter I held in my pocket from Jefferson Davis, whom I had known in Washington while he was Senator and

my father was Congressman. After he was liberated from Fortress Monroe he came by our house and remained a day or two to rest, for he was worn out and almost blind. While there I asked him for a letter of recommendation. He smiled at this, and when I told him to whom I would present it he said:

“‘My boy, I’ll give you the letter, but I don’t think anyone at the North would consider it of much value.’ So when the president of the insurance company asked me who I was, I pulled out this letter of Mr. Davis’; and without a word handed it to him. When he saw who had written it he almost dropped it. The directors looked over it and seemed amazed at my effrontery. I chuckled and said:

“‘Gentlemen, I have no apologies to make, none whatever. That letter will mean a lot to me all over the South in establishing your business.’ This last idea caught them and then the president said:

“‘Major, will you come up to-morrow at twelve and take lunch with us? I will have the other directors of the company here, and until then I would like to keep this letter.’ I assented, of course, and the next day presented myself in my slick old clothes. I dined with the gentlemen, and the scheme was talked over. They agreed to open business in the South, not only in Georgia, but the entire section, and put me in charge of it. Just before leaving, I smiled and looked at my shabby clothes and said:

“‘Gentlemen, there is just one thing; I want an advancement of some money. I need some new clothes, first, as these are all I have; and I will need money to begin business upon; and you must advance

me several thousand dollars. They agreed. I met my old friend, Jack, at the hotel later, and we sat down and took a drink and renewed our friendship of boyhood. The one regret of my life is he died without us ever meeting again. So, you see, he was the means by which I got my start after the war, for I would likely never have been admitted into the presence of the officers of the company but for him. I want you and Andy to marry, for I want you to live right near me." The Major had barely concluded his story when Andy appeared, for they were to go to witness the races then at their height. As they sat in their carriage, nudging Miss Marbury, the Major whispered:

"Encourage him." She smiled and whispered in response:

"How shall I do it?"

"When we step out of the carriage you take his arm and lean on it. He'll understand."

"And that's encouragement, is it?"

"Yes, that's one way; but there are a million, and you know every one of them by heart."

Miss Marbury smiled and looked off undetermined whether she would give Andy any encouragement or not, for her mind was not definitely made up whether she would accept him if he should propose. When she stepped from the carriage at the park she slyly winked at the Major and, advancing to Andy's side, took his arm. Mrs. Martin's astonishment showed itself by her arched brows and, turning to the Major,

she saw a smile playing upon his broad face. He, offering his arm to her, said:

"This seems to be the stylish way to do things."

Mrs. Martin, however, declined his arm as she replied: "Oh, we are too old, Major, for such frivolity."

"Never mind! In fact, I never expect to be too old to indulge in the joys of youth. When that time comes I shall pray the Lord to take me hence. I will go and make a plump angel, have red wings, and a harp." During this colloquy Andy had led the way into the grand-stand, where, noticing a negro boy as jockey, he turned to Major and said:

"Major, I have not kept up with the horses entered to-day, but if you will give me odds, four to one, there being seven horses in the race—I will bet on the horse ridden by the negro jockey."

"No," said the Major, "I will not do that; I'll take the boy myself."

"Why do you do that, are the negroes the best jockeys?" asked Miss Marbury.

"No," said Andy, not that; but the negro is from our part of the country, and I feel like backing him."

"I didn't think you Southerners had much opinion of the negroes," interposed Mrs. Martin, in a tone of surprise.

"That's where you are wrong, Mrs. Martin," responded the Major; "we like the negro in his place, and he likes us."

"What is his place?" asked she quickly.

"Principally as a servant," laughingly replied Miss Marbury, glancing significantly at Andy.

"Yes, to us the negro is a servant strictly," responded he, "and as such we like him and stick to him." The discussion on this phase of the subject continued until the race began, without the Major and Andy agreeing upon a wager. The horse ridden by the negro boy came in first, and both Major and Andy seemed to be overjoyed. Mrs. Martin could not understand their feelings, but Miss Marbury smiled at the two men, and remarked:

"You Southerners contradict yourselves every minute respecting the negro."

"Not at all, not at all," replied the Major; "it is just because you don't understand us or the negro."

"You wouldn't shake hands with him and congratulate him as you would a white man," said Miss Marbury.

"Oh, yes, we would," said Andy earnestly, "if we knew the boy. I have shaken hands with many negroes."

"Martha, you must come South right away and live for six months,—if not all your life,—and see just how we do treat the negro."

"I already know. In fact, I have made quite a study of the negro question," responded she, arching her brows and pitching those starlit eyes at Andy. He smiled significantly while the Major remarked with sarcasm:

"Yes, the way you have studied it is like knowing Egypt from pictures of the pyramids. Come into Egypt, and see the pyramids themselves, around which hangs the traditions of a people, the inspiration of a race. Then you may know, not before."

CHAPTER III

Notwithstanding the encouragement Miss Marbury gave in leaning upon his arm, Andy did not advance in his effort to propose. In fact, true to nature, the more she encouraged him the more he hesitated. In his imagination he saw Dorothy, in her haughty manner, protesting against this marriage. Then, too, his fears that Miss Marbury would be unhappy South grew with every hour. She was antagonistic to the Southern view of all public questions; and time, considered he, instead of allaying would augment her opposition. She could not compromise, it was not her nature. Yet his love for her would cry out against his conclusion. He was about to decide not to speak until she should come on her visit to the Major,—which she had agreed to do in the early fall,—but just as he reached this conclusion, on the last evening before departing for home, the Major came into his room and took a seat preparatory to debate. Andy stood before the mirror adjusting his tie with great care. He would look his best at dinner.

“Andy,” exclaimed the Major earnestly, “you’ll make the mistake of your life, if you leave here without asking Martha to be your wife.”

Without looking around, Andy replied:

“Yes, I feel that way; yet I hesitate.”

“Why?” demanded the Major.

“Well, I don’t know that she’s in love with me, and Dorothy will oppose it; and then she’s from the

North, misunderstands all the conditions South, and might not be happy there."

"Tut! tut! She'll understand everything, and accommodate herself to every condition."

"She's awfully set in her ways, Major, and an idea once in that head can never be prized out. She already has a fool notion about the negro."

"Ah, tut, man! Don't let a little thing like that come between you. Six months will open her eyes to the real problem, and she'll go along with the rest of us seeing things as we do and acting as we do."

"If I thought she would, I wouldn't hesitate; but if we married and she felt that she was called as a reformer, it would make life unbearable for both of us."

"Yes," agreed the Major, "she's been reading books upon the subject by men who passed through the South in a night; books written to be sold; that pandered to the opinion of the supposed purchasers. Then, too, the people in New England take a different view of the subject from anybody else, as they judge all negroes by the few intelligent mulattoes who live among them and by those professors in negro colleges who visit the North in search of money. But, Andy, as I tell you, she will realize all this after she's been there a time. Do you know of a single intelligent man or woman from the North, who has come South and lived there for six months, that did not absolutely change all preconceived notions, and instead of being a champion of the negro did not turn against him; and even refuse to employ him as a servant?"

"Yes, I know that's true, but I feel that Martha will be different; that convinced, as she is, of the correctness of her views she will refuse to see the situation as we do, no matter how plain it may be."

"Then you are going to let your fears rob you of a wife?"

"No; I am undecided what to do. I feel that I'll make a mistake if I don't marry her, and yet realize that I am liable to make a great mistake if I do. I think I had best say nothing to her now, but wait until she comes South to spend several months with you."

"I don't like that way of courting; it sounds very sensible, but reason has very little to do with love. Love is a part to itself, and must dominate everything. I tell you she's too able a woman not to understand the situation at home, and I advise you to ask her to be your wife to-night. Take my advice—I, a man of experience, have behind me forty odd years of happy married life." Andy turned suddenly, and walking toward the Major said, as he stopped in front of him:

"I'll do it; I'll ask her to-night." Notwithstanding the Major suffered somewhat with a stiffness in the knees, and usually considered them carefully before testing them with sudden action, he sprang to his feet and extending his hand, grasped Andy's, and exclaimed heartily:

"The wisest thing you have ever said in your life! Now stick to it and be happy all your days!"

They now went down to dinner and found Miss Marbury and Mrs. Martin already seated. Andy

sat opposite Miss Marbury, and his eyes continually rested upon her, but he felt nervous and had little to say. He was thinking over just how he would broach the subject after dinner, and how he would frame his proposal. Miss Marbury noticed his nervousness, as did the Major. It was fun to him, but she, realizing what it meant, became confused herself.

As they rose from the table Andy, true to his intention, advanced quickly to Miss Marbury's side and, forgetting his cigar even, strolled with her to the porch. He hadn't said a word in going, nor had she. Two seats upon a far corner were observed in the moonlight. A young lover would have sought a secluded spot, one that was dark, for he would have expected at the grand climax to have thrown his arms around his sweetheart and kissed her. Andy, however, expected nothing of this kind; party of the first part was to propose, and party of the second part would maybe ask for time. He thought this would be the way of it. Taking seats, still without having said a word, they both looked out upon the shadows made by the trees. It was an ideal time and an ideal spot for love-making, but this occurred to neither. Both were excited, and neither knew just what was going to happen. Andy had not determined how to begin the proposition of party of the first part. Various plans had suggested themselves, but none had met his approval. Finally, he said, nervously:

"Miss Marbury, I leave to-morrow."

She stammered a trifle as she replied:

"Yes; I know." There was a long silence, or at least it seemed long to both. "I am sorry you are going," finally remarked she, breathing so deeply that it almost seemed a sigh.

Andy made no reply to this, but sat steadily looking before him, seeing nothing, for all his faculties were intent now upon words and not scenes. Turning his face toward her he said bluntly:

"Will you be my wife?"

She did not expect any vehement declaration of love, but the bluntness of this proposal of the party of the first part startled her, and she remained silent.

"Did you hear me?" asked he.

"Yes, I heard you; but I don't know how to answer."

"I think I could make you a happy woman, for I love you with all my heart and soul."

"I think you could too, and I may marry you; but to-night I don't feel like saying that I will."

The ice was now broken, and both felt easy, and for a time they talked over the matter almost in the style of party of the first part and party of the second part would have done in a contract to which they agreed, yet hesitated to sign.

"I am going to accept the Major's invitation to visit him, and after I have been South some time we will know each other better; and then we can talk the matter over again," said she finally, without the slightest emotion. A touch of the romantic impelled Andy to take her hand and give it a slight pressure, then release it. She submitted to this, rather en-

joyed it, and he again told her that he loved her, and she was pleased.

"I think I love you," she said;" certainly, I never felt toward any other man as I do you; and I feel that we will one day marry."

"I am perfectly willing to wait; in fact, I didn't hope for you to say to-night that you would be my wife. I am satisfied to wait until you come down to my home, and see things as they are." Their conversation now fell along lines as to life in the Southland until the discreet approval of Mrs. Martin signified that it was time her ward retired.

When Andy told the Major of what had occurred the kindly old gentleman expressed his delight, but his vein of humor triumphed over the solemnity of the matter, and he said in his glee:

"By ganny! I would like to have heard it. I know it was business-like." He questioned Andy for details, but he failed to get them, for Andy shook his head and said:

"No, sir; you shall not hear one word."

CHAPTER IV

From the day Andy left Saratoga he became a changed man: business now meant so much more to him than ever before, and the philosophy that had directed contentment now took wings and diligence became master. He communicated this to Miss Marbury, who had returned home, and she smiled with keen satisfaction over the influence she was exerting upon her lover. The feeling was new and was superb.

"I'll make a Yankee of him in a short while," mused she again and again as she would read his letters, which came with every mail. She had fully decided to accept him, and over her lofty purpose to go South and do her part in establishing in unduring form the old house of Whitfield she took no little pride. It became an inspiration to action, and in the realms of fancy she continually dwelled. Time dragged, for every day now that separated her from Andy and her purpose was counted as lost. Had he insisted upon marriage now instead of waiting, she, more than likely, would have gladly consented. But this did not occur to him. He thought she preferred to visit the South first, and waited her coming with anxiety.

Finally the day arrived upon which she had set to start upon her journey, and took her seat in the coach with elated spirit. During the days necessary for the trip Andy was nervous and could scarcely sleep. He had ceased to fear that she would not

like the South, as his mind was completely taken up with his love for her and his plans for life. He had outlined everything to his sister Dorothy, who, if not in sympathy with him, made no objections; yet all who knew her well understood that this marriage of her brother to a "Yankee schoolmarm" was not to her choice. She had determined to wait the arrival of the young woman and look her over before she came to any conclusions upon what action she would take. The Major had discussed the matter with her often, but he had never been able to obtain an expression of opinion. He feared the meeting between the forceful woman; feared Dorothy's opposition, not that she could control her brother, but she could make it so unpleasant for Miss Marbury that she might alter her purpose entirely.

On the day Miss Marbury was to arrive Andy was up at daylight and watched the sun rise over the eastern hills along which his future wife was speeding on her way. She was to reach the station at twelve o'clock. The evening before he had been over to see the Major, and all details had been talked over. The Major would be at the station promptly and bring her home, while Andy would look after the baggage. At least an hour before the time for the train to arrive old Dick, the Major's faithful servant and ex-slave, brought around the victoria. The Major had owned this vehicle for some thirty years, but it just suited him, for it was low, and he could get in and out without difficulty. True, the style in victorias had changed greatly during this time, but he had never thought of getting a new one. He

sought comfort, and when he had it he was satisfied. He had had it gone over many times and kept it spick and span, as he did his harness and horses; but change it for a new one, never. Old Dick was his coachman, and now, mounted on the box, wearing the Major's discarded frock coat, silk hat, and fancy waistcoat, he presented as dignified appearance as the Major himself.

Mrs. Sims could not accompany her husband to the station, as she thought Andy was coming back in the victoria, so she determined to welcome her guest upon the threshold of her home. The Major entered the ancient vehicle and slowly rode down Peachtree street, bowing to the right and the left as he saw his friends strolling along. It was the middle of October, and every lawn was yet green, while the leaves upon the trees had taken on their brilliant autumnal hues. The air was balmy, yet crisp enough to be invigorating; a half an hour in it would make one feel as glorious as if one had had a glass of old wine. The Major drove directly to Andy's office and waited there on the march of time, which was slow, for Andy was busy with clients, and could not talk to him. Finally the hour came, and Andy stepped from his private office with a smile upon his lips, but his heart was beating like a trip-hammer. He had never felt more nervous, not even when he spoke the first time his love. A vague fear had possessed him for days—perhaps the solemn look that appeared now all the time in Dorothy's face that seem to betoken trouble.

Arriving at the station they had but a few mo-

ments to wait when the engine came thundering in like a horse that had completed the race ahead of all competitors. Andy felt his heart give a jump and then seemed to stand still; his throat become dry, while his hands gave out a cold perspiration. At Saratoga doubts like thunder-clouds had arisen about the advisability of asking Martha to be his wife, but now the sky was clear, for his love for her surpassed everything in life. All must yield; Dorothy should not come between; conditions themselves must give way before the all-absorbing flame.

Miss Marbury now appeared at the doorway of the coach, and the Major began to clap his hands, while Andy, so nervous he could hardly smile, pressed forward through the crowd toward her with his hat in his hand. She, however, seemed calmness itself as her eyes met those of Andy. With her all was settled. Such doubts as she had at one time about giving up home and old friends to go into a new country were behind her. She had come not prospecting, but to locate.

Andy took charge of the many bundles while the Major led her toward the victoria, chatting glibly all the while. Overtaking them before they reached the doorway, Andy explained that he could not accompany her to the Major's, as clients were waiting his immediate return. At this she smiled knowingly, as she recalled what he had written about his attention to business, while pride strutted like a peacock over the fact that she had changed this man of indolence into a Yankee already.

As they stepped upon the sidewalk, negro hack-

men and negro boys composed a large majority of the crowd, and were shouting for passengers. Miss Marbury looked astonished to see so many negroes and so few whites, and drew back as the hackmen rushed up. The scene was so natural to the Major that he never noticed Miss Marbury's expression, nor felt her hesitation; but laughingly waved the crowd aside as he went forward. Such remarks as, "Git out'n de way, niggers, dis is Major Sims; he's got he own private kerage. He don't ride in no hacks!" made no impression on him, but they did upon her as she looked from face to face in wonderment. Shabbily dressed, and some even filthily so, she was receiving her first shock. None of the hackmen were in uniform, all clothed in any old thing they might happen to have. Not one wore a collar, and as for a necktie or gloves—they were useless appendages; and shoes,—they may have been polished when new, but never since,—and likely few pairs were mates. Depositing the bundles at the feet of old Dick, Andy asked for the trunk checks and saying, "I'll see you to-night," turned toward the baggage-room. The Major and Miss Marbury were now chatting gleefully as they sped along toward his beautiful home.

Peachtree street particularly impressed Miss Marbury, especially the lawns.

"Oh, there's nothing like the blue-grass front!" exclaimed the Major with pride.

"How I like cities built up this way, instead of having houses which come right out to the street," cried Miss Marbury in ecstasy.

"Yes," replied the Major, "in the old days all of us lived in the country where we had plenty of land; and now, unless we have a big front yard and a large garden, we feel cramped. Then, too, you will notice we all have large porches, upon which we live about eight to nine months in the year."

It was some two miles from the station to the Major's beautiful home, which sat back a hundred feet from the street, and in a veritable jungle of flowers and plants. The walkway was lined on each side with violets, with here and there rose-bushes reaching out as though to hand the guest a bloom. On each side of the steps stood huge hot-house banana plants, while to the right was a great bed of caladiums that screened the porch from view. Near the center of the yard were two large magnolias, whose rich, thick, green leaves never faded. The lawn was a riot of color, for the Major so managed that each month should be as beautiful as that that had gone before. He didn't like the winter months, as they robbed him of his beautiful yard. True, he then had his blue grass, but it was only one color, when he delighted in putting the rainbow to shame. Miss Marbury stopped involuntarily as she looked upon it, and raised her hands over the beautiful sight, exclaiming in rapture:

"How lovely, how lovely! I have never seen anything so beautiful!"

The Major was pleased that she noticed his flowers; they were his principal care, and every day found him tending them. He kept the low iron fence near the sidewalk festooned all the year with

rare flowers. One day a neighbor informed him that the school children were in the habit of plucking these flowers as they passed. The Major laughed jovially and said: "I know it; that's what I keep them there for." In the walkway Miss Marbury stopped and looked at the house with delight. It was the Southern colonial style, with a broad porch extending the entire length in front, and almost to the rear on the right; and upon which stood ten fluted Corinthian columns. Everything white, except window-blinds of green. The windows came to the floor, and so tall were they that one scarcely had to stoop to enter. Upon the end of the porch, on the right, there was a swing suspended with chains, and everywhere appeared a rocking-chair—not a straight-up one to be seen.

Mrs. Sims now appeared in the doorway as a vision. With a round, beautiful face crowned with white hair, and lighted by two bright, merry eyes, she was refinement's masterpiece.

"This is Martha, Andy's bride-to-be!" shouted Major jovially.

"Never mind him, Martha," replied Mrs. Sims, greeting her guest with such a welcome that at once captivated and charmed, "he's always teasing some one,"

Indeed so impressed was Miss Marbury that she felt like taking this dear woman into her arms and exclaiming with all her heart:

"Oh, you dear, you dear! I feel almost as near to you as if you were my mother."

"The cordial greeting was scarcely over between

them when Malinda, the cook, who had been a slave of Mrs. Sims, and who had remained with her "Mistress" without interruption from the day of her birth to the present, came forward to welcome this friend of the family. Behind her came Fronie, her granddaughter and Mrs. Sims' maid. They were presented to Miss Marbury, and Fronie was assigned as maid to her. Advancing into the library, which was also the living-room, Miss Marbury again saw color in all its shades. The room was large, very, and light flooded from two sides. Never any somberness here. Rare paintings and etchings adorned the walls, while exquisite intaglios and marble busts sat here and there as supervisors of taste. It opened into the dining-room, which was also very large and shone with light and beauty. Seldom were there two rooms more gorgeous, yet so homelike. Taste was master and beauty mistress.

Delighted with the warmth of her reception, Miss Marbury prepared herself to like everything, even Dorothy, whom the Major laughingly intimated would pull her hair.

CHAPTER V

Andy was detained at his office until late, so that he had been with Miss Marbury but a few moments when he had to go home to dress for dinner, as he and Dorothy were to go over to dine with Major and Mrs. Sims. He felt nervous over this meeting of his sister and his sweetheart and hurrying through the simple process of changing his business to his dress suit, he went below to wait for Dorothy. She kept him waiting until he called for her again and again. Finally she came down, dressed not only tastefully but most expensively; for this she would do. The distance to Major's was short, and it was also quiet, for both were thoughtful. The Major, Mrs. Sims, and Miss Marbury were in the library when they arrived, and as they entered Miss Marbury's eyes glanced past Andy to his sister. There stood a tall woman, as straight as an Indian, with lustrous black eyes and immense tresses of black hair; a long face with character in every lineament; a pointed chin; upturned, thin nose, and thin lips. The face denoted talent, force, and beauty combined. At least, many thought Dorothy beautiful, all considered her grand-looking. She had less self-restraint than Andy and was far more emotional and romantic.

The flashes of the two women met, and it was war. The Major presented them in majestic form. Neither he nor Andy perceived anything in the demeanor of the two to excite them, but the subtle nature of Mrs. Sims recognized a conflict had begun.

Dorothy, narrow and prejudiced, believed that the South contained the aristocracy of the country; that the Puritan blood was very common; and that all Yankees were penurious, niggardly people; and resented her brother marrying into them.

Andy took his seat by Miss Marbury and began to talk to her quietly, but the Major would not have this, and soon directed the conversation upon general lines. Miss Marbury did not join in very much, nor did Dorothy; they were measuring the length of the other's sword, its mettle, and its temper.

Dinner being announced, the Major placed Dorothy opposite Miss Marbury, who sat by Andy. The table was round, so that all were near one another. Andy took the lead in conversation, in fact, appeared in a gale of delight. Miss Marbury was astonished, for at Saratoga she had never seen him in such spirits, but she felt it was a tribute to her presence. The Major, too, was in splendid humor, and the little side tilts between him and Andy were particularly diverting. Adjourning to the library, Andy sang a number of negro melodies in dialect, with ludicrous words but of sentiment pathetic. Miss Marbury was particularly pleased with one, a lullaby which ran:

"Oh, bah, black sheep, aire you got any lambs?

Yes; way down in de valley.

De buzzards an' de flies am peckin' out deh eyes,

En de po' little things cry mammy.

REFRAIN

Go to sleep, go to sleep, go to sleep, little baby;

THE BLACK MANTLE

43

Mammy loves de baby, pappy loves de baby,
Everybody loves de baby.
Mammy said to me when she went away,
To teck good care of de baby.
When she come back she'd gim me a piece o' pie.
Fur teckin' good care of de baby.
Go to sleep, etc.
All dem horses in dat field belongs to you, little baby;
De dapple en de gray, en de white en de bay,
All belongs to you, little baby.
Go to sleep," etc.

"Now I am somewhat of a songster myself," said the Major laughingly, "and if you will give me your attention I'll sing one of the old negro halleluiahs tunes that I have heard on the plantation as a boy."

"Look out, sinner, as you step upon de cross,
Yo' foot might sllip, en yo' soul'd be lost.
Gwine get a home by and by, etc.

Miss Marbury clapped her hands as he concluded. She had enjoyed every minute since her arrival, and notwithstanding the poised lances between her and Dorothy she was delighted with the homelike manner with which she had been received, and determined to overlook the feeling she saw Dorothy had for her. Several times Dorothy attempted to get Miss Marbury to express her opinion of the South as she had seen it, but Miss Marbury was too wary, as she knew it would lead to discussion.

She had been greatly surprised, of course, at everything she had seen since she left Washington,

particularly surprised at the way the country looked, for she rather expected everything to be flat and sandy, with pines, flowers, and moss everywhere. When she came along into the shadows of the mountains in Virginia and North Carolina she looked on with mute astonishment, and striking the foothills of the Blue Ridge in North Georgia, some of which seemed even higher than any mountain in New England, she concluded she knew nothing about the geography of the South. The cotton fields, too, surprised her, as they were nothing like what she expected to see; her idea being that cotton grew upon bushes six and eight feet high, and to see it upon little scrubby stalks not exceeding two and a half to three feet she was unprepared for. At a small station where the train stopped she obtained several cotton bolls from a boy standing by, and taking them in the car sat for sometime picking the lint from the seed. Everything was so strange. The red-clay banks, washed until tremendous gullies appeared everywhere, give the land a look of poverty. The farmers were meanly clad, and their old, broad-brimmed, faded felt hats, coatless and collarless persons, presented anything but a progressive appearance. True, it was only the small farmers, who were day-laborers, whom she saw. Around each station where the train stopped many negroes had gathered, all of whom were most untidily clothed. They would smile gleefully as they looked at the passengers through the windows, and make humorous remarks, guessing where they were from. She wondered if they ever worked, and if they had

ever felt a care. Now and then she would see bales of cotton piled upon one another near a farmhouse, and sometimes at a station she would observe several hundred standing upon end, with a slit in the bagging from which samples had been taken, leaving an ugly gap. She could hardly realize from these bales the South was receiving annually some six to eight hundred million dollars. No one else could have realized it as he looked upon the thin soil that appeared alongside the railroad tracks. Indeed, the scenes presented along almost all of the railroads running South is anything but inspiring. Reaching Atlanta it seemed an oasis in the wilderness, and all disagreeable forebodings disappeared in the cordiality shown her.

After rising from the table Dorothy renewed her attempt to bring out Miss Marbury's opinion upon the South, by remarking:

"You have seen a novel sight in the negroes here that you have never seen in New England."

Miss Marbury laughed at this and replied:

"Yes; oh, yes. They, indeed, are very different. I find them very amusing in appearance as well as in their ways." Andy, scenting danger, determined there should be no discussion of the negro by his sister and his sweetheart on this occasion, and quickly interrupted by laughing and saying:

"Don't form an opinion too quickly now, by what you see; for you are liable to make a great mistake. You understand we have negroes and negroes."

"Some are dull, and some are bright,
Some are black, and some are light;
None are good, nor all are bad,
All are funny, and none are sad;
Too bad, too bad!"

The Major perceived Andy's point and laughing at his doggeral, exclaimed:

"Miss Marbury has met old Dick, Malinda, and Fronie, and captured them; I heard them talking about her in the kitchen. Malinda was greatly surprised to find that ladies from Boston looked just like the ladies here. I don't know how she expected you to look, Martha, but I heard her expatiating at length upon it."

Without intending to begin a debate upon the negro question, Miss Marbury turned to the Major and asked:

"Do all of the people here think as much of their servants as you and Mrs. Sims do?" Before the Major could answer, Dorothy's clear, resonant voice rolled in mirth. It was an answer surpassing words, for surprise and ridicule were commingled in each note. The Major laughed himself, and replied:

"No; not by any means, for very few of the people now have with them their old slaves. The truth is, most all of those who were slaves are too old now for servants, and they are merely pensioners upon their former masters. I have several on my plantation whom I have to support. But most of the negro servants are the grandchildren of our former slaves, and a few of those are with the families that one time owned their parents; and in

such cases feeling between master and servant is very cordial indeed."

"What is the proportion of negroes to whites in the State?" asked Miss Marbury.

"The whites are less than two per cent. in the majority," replied Andy.

"What!" exclaimed Miss Marbury in astonishment.

"In the county where Andy and I still own our old plantation the percentage of blacks is greater than the whites. Is that not true, brother?" demanded Dorothy.

Andy did not care for this line of conversation to continue and smiling replied:

"Yes, the negroes exceed the whites; and in some of the counties in south Georgia they exceed the whites eight and ten to one. Major, you and I must take Martha down to your plantation or to mine before long, and let her see the real country negro."

"I should be delighted to go," said Miss Marbury with earnestness.

"Good! Good!" exclaimed the Major; "we'll get up a house-party for the week-end. But my superintendent lives in my house; is it that way with yours?"

"We are in the same fix," said Dorothy, "and I dislike it. I don't want anybody to live in our old home; I would rather it would be shut up, but Andy won't have it that way."

"Andy," began Major, "do you get anything from your plantation?"

"Not with cotton at eight cents a pound; but at twelve I do," replied Andy, smiling significantly.

"I should say so. If the price will remain at twelve cents the South will soon be as wealthy as it was before the war."

"I do hope it will," here interjected Dorothy, "for I am tired being poor. I want plenty of money to spend, and a beautiful home furnished, with everything that money can buy. I want every luxury known. I should like to have gold plates, knives, and forks. I want the rarest pictures and most exquisite vases that genius can create." Dorothy was artistic and desired wealth, not so much for its sake, but for its uses. She loved the beautiful and would like to remove everything that didn't please her eye.

"Miss Marbury," began the Major, "have you no multi-millionaire in Boston whom you could bring down here for Dorothy? He must be worth not less than fifty or a hundred million, however. No ordinary millionaire would fill the bill."

Miss Marbury laughed as she replied:

"No, we have no such; the multi-millionaires among us have made their fortunes themselves, and for the most part are old men who are in love with their dollars. Plain things suit them."

"Yes, I suppose it is with you, as it is the world over, the very wealthy are new-people. It is certainly true here. But understand, I am not against these new people, not at all; they have made themselves, and the world must recognize their merit."

Dorothy laughed tauntingly as she tossed her eyes at Major and replied:

"It's all right for you to talk that way,—it sounds well,—but I notice you never have them at your dinners. Never!"

"No," replied the Major quickly, "I only have my old friends; and my dinners are small ones. I do not enjoy big dinner parties. When you have more than eight or ten it's a *function*, and functions are tiresome. At a dinner the conversation should be general to be bright and entertaining, and when you have to sit and talk to your neighbor only, you are liable to eat too much, and feel loggy."

Dorothy arose at eleven, saying it was time to go home, and invited all to dinner the next evening with her and Andy. The invitation was accepted, as it had been understood already that Dorothy would extend it. As Andy and Dorothy strolled home he didn't ask his sister what she thought of Miss Marbury, he waited for her to express herself,—but this she didn't do. He had not told her that he was in love with Miss Marbury, but had said enough for Dorothy to understand he was. She made no objection, further than to smile incredulously. That was all, but it was enough.

CHAPTER VI

The next morning after breakfast the Major strolled into his front yard, and as the sun smiled upon every flower he looked around him, and the scene was so beautiful and the air so infused with life that he recited the lines:

"Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
Bridal of earth and sky,
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night;
For thou, alas, must die!"

Strolling around near the caladiums he discovered old Dick, who was working and humming an old cornfield tune.

"Hello, Dick! What old tune is that?" asked the Major. Dick raised up chuckling, and replied:

"Humph! Don't you know dat? I ain't thought o' hit in many a day. Es youngsters we uster hear it on de plantation."

"Dick, I suppose but for the war you and I would now be living on the plantation as country gentlemen. How do you think you would like that?"

Dick chuckled again gleefully as he replied:

"Dat's de onliest way to lib, perviden hit wus des es it wus befo' de war; but I don't think I would like it so much now."

"No, no, I reckon not; although I love the country. But times have changed greatly, Dick, and we have changed with them. Yet, all's for the best."

"Yas, sah, I reckon it is. I wouldn't want to go back into slavery, yit, my bes' days wus spent es a slave runnin' round wid you."

"Yes," smilingly responded the Major, "we had good times together."

Old Dick chuckled again and said reflectingly:

"I 'members des es if hit wus yistiddy, the day you wus born. I wus de fust nigger chil' to teck you in deh arms. Huc! En you set up such a squall dat it skeered me, an' I come pow'ful nigh drappin' ye."

"Yes, you had me walking so early that you made me bow-legged."

Dick laughed at this and shaking his head replied:

"Dat warn't it; you jes natu'ly bow-legged. Ol' Marse was so befo' you. He always say deh wus a sign of strength."

The Major dropped down upon an iron seat near one of the magnolia trees and rubbed his knees. Miss Marbury now came out and joined them. Taking a seat and turning to Uncle Dick, she asked how he was.

"I des tola'ble, Miss Marbury."

"Why, what's the trouble?" inquired she, as she smiled upon the old fellow, who looked very comical with his hat off, as his head appeared so bald and slick on top, having only a fringe of white kinky hair around the lower part; and as he smiled one lone tooth appeared in his mouth. All the others had long since worn away, and the gums had so shriveled that this lone tooth seemed twice its natural length. In fact, looked like a stalactite in a

cave; and as his lips would open and close it gave the old fellow a most comical appearance, for the tooth seemed to be playing hide and seek. In answer to Miss Marbury's inquiry, he explained:

"I been had a misery in my back now gwine on three days. I speeks dat ol' Sam Wilson has conjured me."

"Oh, go long, you old thing; talking about being conjured, as though you were some ignorant darkey!" exclaimed the Major, laughing.

Miss Marbury also laughed and then said:

"Why, Uncle Dick, you don't believe in such things?"

"Yas, um, I do; particular of Sam Wilson; for he's a Guinea nigger."

"A Guinea negro! What difference does that make?" asked Miss Marbury, indicating surprise.

"He got blue gums, en ken cast a spell on you; dat he can."

The Major laughed, and Miss Marbury smiled at such an idea. Old Dick shook his head and smiled, too, and that lone tooth stood forth again, as he exclaimed:

"Yas, sah, he ken. He got er evil eye, an' hits bin on me, now for days."

"Dick! Dick! I thought I had got you out of all that foolishness!" exclaimed the Major.

"What medicine do you use to relieve yourself of the spell cast on you?" inquired Miss Marbury. The Major laughed at this, and looked at Dick in anticipation of his reply, for he knew what it was going to be. Dick stammered for awhile, knowing

Major was going to laugh, as he had done many times before; but seeing Miss Marbury intently waiting, he finally said:

"No doctor ken tech dese troubles; you got ter do it yo'se'f. Deh's a lot o' ways, but sometimes none o' 'em will he'p you. Las' night I tried ter make a stew of certain yarbs an' grave yard rabbit, but I couldn't get de rabbit, en de yarbs by dem-se'ves didn't do no good."

The Major looked at Miss Marbury as much as to ask:

"Now what do you think of that?" Miss Marbury didn't want to give offense to Dick, and yet it was difficult to keep from laughing at the old fellow's ideas.

"Miss Marbury, do the negroes around Boston believe that other negroes can cast spells on them?" inquired the Major facetiously.

"No; I never heard of it."

"Cause deh ain't no Guinea niggers dar, dat's why!" exclaimed Dick earnestly, looking from one to the other.

"Why do you call them Guinea negroes?" asked Miss Marbury. Old Dick shook his head, for he couldn't answer this. All he knew was what had been handed down about these negroes, who were supposed to have the power to cast a spell on others. They had been called Guinea negroes, and Dick so called them. Major smiled as he exclaimed:

"The Guinea negroes are from a certain section of Africa, and when brought over to this country, as I understand it, were the blackest of all the negro

race; and among them were root doctors of whom the other negroes were dreadfully afraid. They were supposed to possess miraculous power; besides, it was claimed they had blue gums which contained poison. They were a vicious race, and in their fights used their teeth almost like dogs. From this, I suppose, originated fear of the Guinea negro. However, it may be a tradition in Africa; I would be surprised if it were not."

"Do all the negroes believe in it?" asked Miss Marbury.

"Do they, Dick?" asked Major, looking at the old fellow, who had partially turned away. He now politely looked at his questioners and said:

"Some o' 'em pretend not to; 'en I heerd Bishop Gately laugh at it, and say it's all foolishness; but wid me hit's a fac', fur I have knowed Guinea niggers all my life." With this the old fellow turned and begun to work in the flower bed.

"I want to see a good deal of the negroes while I am here," said Miss Marbury; "am very anxious to understand the real situation. I may wish to address my society at home that has given great study to the matter."

"Well, my dear, it is a great problem, one of the greatest to-day before the American people," replied Major, rather seriously for him.

"What is its solution?" asked she, as though it were as capable of being solved as a proposition in geometry. The Major chuckled and looking at her asked banteringly:

"What did your society say was the settlement?"

"Oh, there were various solutions suggested, but we have never formally determined the subject; we are still investigating and considering."

"My dear," began he, as he patted her hands, and smiled mirthfully, "when your society determines the solution I want you to let me know at once; for I shall hail it with delight, as no doubt it will be correct."

Miss Marbury smiled at his sarcasm and replied tartly:

"All right; I'll telegraph you if you deem it so important."

"To settle the status of ten million negroes in this country in a way that will be accepted throughout the land is no little proposition, my dear. What might suit the negro might not suit us, and what we might think proper he would likely reject; and being citizens under the law there is no way to bring about anything definite through legislation."

"I don't think the solution is to be brought about through legislation; it's through education," said she quickly. He smiled upon her in a fatherly way and replied derisively:

"You would have them taught *hic, haec, hoc; hujus, hujus, hujus*, eh? He pronounced *hujus* in a deep, ludicrous tone. Ignoring his ridicule, she responded seriously:

"I would give some of them a liberal education, yes; but to the mass I would teach the amenities of life, as well as a practical way of earning a living."

"Martha, there never will be a settlement of the negro problem as long as the two races inhabit this

country. No two alien races have ever yet lived together in harmony. In order to do so they have had to intermarry and thus wipe out all differences in blood. This can never happen with the white and the negro races; therefore, the only other absolute settlement would be the colonization of the negro, yet that is impracticable. The negroes do not want to leave here, and they cannot be made to go. Then, too, at present the South needs them as laborers, and to send them away at once would deprive the world of the cotton necessary for clothing. It is a big proposition, and, my dear, I want your society to work it out."

Mrs. Sims now came out, and as her cheery voice called to them from the porch, they turned and beckoned to her to join them. As she approached she remarked:

"Dorothy has just telephoned that she'll be over this morning, and that if we had nothing else to do we'd drive down into the shopping district."

"How do you like Dorothy, Martha? Do you think you two would get along as sisters-in-law?" asked the Major teasingly.

"Come, Martha, if you yield to him he'll be teasing you all the time about getting married; I would have nothing to say to him on the subject," interposed Mrs. Sims pleasantly.

"I like Dorothy very much; she is wonderfully handsome, and remarkably forceful. I have an idea she didn't like me very much, though," responded Miss Marbury, looking at Major very earnestly.

"Jealous! You think Andy loves her too much!" exclaimed he, laughing joyously.

Dorothy now appeared, tastefully gowned, and looking so superb. At her coming Miss Marbury felt a little chilly sensation steal over her. She did not know whether she herself felt an antagonism toward Dorothy, or whether it was a consciousness that Dorothy felt it for her. She was anxious to be liked by her, and received as a sister; but the first flash of Dorothy's wonderful eyes had declared very distinctly that it was not to be. The greeting between the two women was very cordial, perhaps a trifle overly so, but Major's gentle badi-nage put all at ease, and the talk ran along gently. Dorothy at once told Miss Marbury that Andy would call to take her for a drive at four o'clock, which was unnecessary, as he had made an engagement with her the evening before. But it was something personal to say, and, too, Dorothy likely desired Miss Marbury to understand that Andy apprised her of his plans. Mrs. Sims and Miss Marbury now went into the house to prepare to go into the city, while Dorothy took a seat by the Major.

"Another beautiful new gown," exclaimed he in admiration as he glanced over her. Dorothy was pleased, and looking at Major asked:

"Did you notice that Miss Marbury has one very much like it?"

"Yes," replied he, "I did, and it's a beauty."

"I thought you said she was poor."

"Well, she isn't rich, but I suppose she's made money and saved it."

"Oh, if she made it she saved it, for she's a Yankee, and they know how to save as well as make. She not only dresses well, but her clothes are very expensive. No woman who didn't have a good deal of money could dress as finely as she does."

"How do you think you'll like her for a sister?" said the Major, scanning her attractive face. Dorothy tilted her head and toyed with her parasol for a moment, and then replied:

"I like her well enough, but I don't care for brother to marry her. I want him to marry one of the girls here."

"Come, come, Dorothy, don't be narrow now. Martha's a very fine woman and will make Andy a good wife. You must get married yourself, so that they will have a fair chance." Again Dorothy tossed her head as she always did at a suggestion of marriage.

"I want you to accept Draper," continued he. "He's a fine fellow, has made a lot of money and will continue to do so."

"Yes," said Dorothy indifferently, "he is a good fellow, and most women would be delighted to marry him, but he's hardly the man for me."

"Come, come! because his people were not as good as yours before the war you think he isn't suitable for you."

"His people were not as good as mine; in fact, they were Crackers. I prefer to marry a man of whose blood I'd be proud. I would want my children so proud of their name that they would die before they would dishonor it."

The Major laughed at this, and taking her hand, said:

"Dorothy, you're too highfalutin. Draper's people, if not of the aristocracy in the days when there were aristocrats, were always honorable, hightoned people; and he is as proud of his name as you are of yours. This is a new day, Dorothy, and distinctions created in bygone times have passed away. Draper stands as well as any man in this city, and deservedly so. He's as well bred and intelligent as any. He's a gentleman in every sense of the word, and is worthy of you. Marry him, Dorothy, marry him and be happy."

Mrs. Sims and Miss Marbury now came out, and the three women took seats in the landau and drove away while the Major strode into the city by himself.

CHAPTER VII

That afternoon Andy drove up in a rubber-tired, "bicycle-wheeled" runabout, hitched to a standard-bred horse which he had raised upon his plantation. By him sat a small negro boy, whom he had brought along to hold the horse while he went in for Miss Marbury. Andy started toward Grant's park, and purposely down Decatur street, which is Atlanta's Bowery; and along a number of small, filthy streets inhabited exclusively by negroes. The streets were crowded with urchins of all shapes and sizes, and while they were all clothed, some were barely so. Miss Marbury looked upon the scene with astonishment, and turning to him, asked eagerly:

"This is the negro quarters of the city, is it?"

"Yes; this is Hell's Half-Acre."

"Hell's Half-Acre! What do you mean?"

Andy smiled and looked around at the little urchins who were following the buggy whooping and yelling like little savages.

"There never is a police court in which there are not some of the denizens of this resort tried for some disorder or crime; and in police circles it is known as Hell's Half-Acre. All the streets leading into it have as characteristic names; for instance, just to the left is Devil's Alley; the narrow one on the right is called Jay Bird Lane. And the whole section for blocks is called Darktown."

"This cannot be the usual street taken to the

park?" inquired she, looking at him with a singular smile of wonder.

"Oh, no! but I thought you would like to see these places, and I brought you through."

Shriveled old women, who apparently didn't know what a bath was, came to the doors and looked out. Miss Marbury drew away from them with aversion; and shudderingly turned to Andy and said: "Please drive on!" Andy smiled, and clucking to the horse soon passed beyond the confines of modern Africa.

"Why did you want me to see those places?" inquired she seriously, after a time.

"Because I thought you would like to see the negro in his squalor and dirt. You want to understand the negro proposition, and must therefore see the negro as he is."

"But these are the very lowest of the negro."

"Yes, isn't it your desire to see the very lowest as well as the very highest?"

For a time Miss Marbury made no response, and Andy perceived that she had not been pleased by his plans to entertain her. By and by they reached the park, and driving up to a large frame house Miss Marbury read in big letters thereon, CYCLO-
RAMA. THE BATTLE AROUND ATLANTA. While her eyes were still upon the building she tapped the lines with her hand as indication for Andy to stop.

"What is this?" asked she.

"That's a huge picture of the battle around Atlanta. Would you like to see it?" replied he.

"Yes; I would." Leaving his horse in charge, they entered the building, and the guide at once

began to explain the great battle. There were pictures of Generals Sherman, Logan, Harrison, Scofield and others of the Union side, with Generals Hood, Walker, Hardee, Wheeler, Cheatham and others of the Confederates, all in action, directing the soldiers who appeared in thousands. Carnage and death were spread all around, with here and there houses aflame. Miss Marbury shuddered as she remarked:

"I believe it was General Sherman who said, 'War is hell!'"

"Yes," replied Andy, "he did; and it was a very fitting description. Our plantation was in the wake of his march through Georgia, and we have hardly recovered from the devastation yet; he even burned the forests. In fact, he left nothing for the people to live upon."

"Why did he do that?" asked Miss Marbury solicitously.

"Well, the march through Georgia was meant to destroy the South's ability to furnish food for her soldiers, and in this way to end the war. That it was a great strategic move there can be no question; but that it was very harsh there is no doubt."

"I suppose, then, the people who live in the line of his march are still very bitter."

"No; I don't know that they are. People have forgotten the war, and it is seldom spoken of. As a whole, all are satisfied with things as they are; glad the country is united under one flag instead of two republics. Had the South succeeded in setting up a separate government I do not believe that we

would have held out longer than the present as such. Reciprocal interests as well as a reverence for the past history of the country would have re-united us."

This theme was dropped, for Andy didn't care to pursue it further; it had been discussed quite enough at Saratoga, and now he drove through the park, around the old breastworks still intact, and up to the monument of General Walker. Interesting as these sights were, Miss Marbury's mind would revert to the negroes she had seen, and she would only nod as Andy pointed out the signs of that great struggle of July 22, 1864.

As they drove back toward the north side of the city, in the direction of Piedmont Park, they passed through a factory district, where the sight was anything but attractive. In fact, the squalor of the factory homes, as well as the bedraggled and shrunk-en faces of the women as they appeared at the doors of their cheap and cheerless houses, was anything but pleasing. And the children, too, apparently under-fed and scantily clothed, presented pinched faces, in which there was but little intelligence or refinement. They were not much superior in appearance to the little negroes that had been seen over in Hell's Half-Acre. Miss Marbury shuddered as she looked at them and exclaimed:

"Great goodness! what do these poor people get out of life?"

"Nothing but a bare living," said Andy. "They won't educate themselves, and but few will allow their children to receive instruction. Compulsory educa-

tion must finally be adopted in order to save them. They are ignorant, yet sensitive; and it is very difficult to reach them through any charitable association."

"Do these men vote?" asked Miss Marbury.

"Oh, yes; many of them, at least, do.

"Do you think they are better qualified to vote than the negroes?"

"Oh, yes; they understand the questions to some extent, certainly; because they inherit the traditions of centuries. They are not intelligent voters, but they could explain public questions, although not able to read. They are far above the negro."

"I am of the opinion that you are controlled by your prejudices, not by the real facts."

"I know them both well, and speak from facts, although I admit I have far more sympathy for the whites than for the blacks. They are my people."

"Yes, that's true, and I have the same feeling as to that; and it makes my heart bleed to see these poor whites in this condition. It is horrible."

In a few moments Andy's fleet horse had passed through the long line of factory huts and reached a boulevard where stood homes of refinement and culture. Both involuntarily turned and looked back, and then at each other, and smiled sadly.

"What a wonderful difference," remarked she.

"Yes; life seems horribly unfair. One end of the street is poverty and distress, while at the other is luxury, intelligence, and power."

In a little while now they reached the clubhouse where Miss Marbury had been taken the day before

by Major Sims. A number of small negro boys dashed up, offering to hold Andy's horse, while he and Miss Marbury went into the country club, where she met the society of the city, but she was not in a humor to enjoy its entertainment. The scenes she had witnessed had aroused her, and her mind was still dwelling upon the unequal conditions that faced the sons of men. She had a very earnest nature, as well as a very sympathetic heart, and thought far more of aiding the unfortunate than indulging her tastes. Coming as she had from scenes of want into a beautifully furnished club, replete with all to make life enjoyable, the contrast weighed upon her. It seemed criminal for one set to have it all while just a little ways off so many had nothing. These feelings were not oppressing Andy, as he was familiar with them; and while of a kindly nature, willing to do anything he could to uplift his unfortunate brother, like the rest of mankind he sat idly by commiserating but not acting.

Miss Marbury seemed rather austere among the pleasure lovers at the club, and many were casting eyes at Andy and wondering why he could fancy such a severe woman. As he was about to order his second julep, Miss Marbury arose and suggested they go. Andy was upon his feet instantly, and they strolled from the room, followed by the smiles of those who knew Andy's fondness for the flesh-pots of Egypt, and realized that his sweetheart condemned these things.

That evening at Andy's home Miss Marbury met a very attractive gathering, which, led by the Major,

allowed no time for reflection upon the inequalities in the lives of the human family. Dorothy was exceedingly gracious, and Miss Marbury constantly kept her eyes upon her. The sister was so much more aggressive than the brother; yet there was nothing bold. It was the difference between the sparkle of champagne and the quiet stimulation of tea. Miss Marbury would turn from one to consider the other. "How could brother and sister be so dissimilar in nature, and yet so much alike?" mused she again and again. Dorothy had an air of superiority that Miss Marbury didn't care for, and yet she was so pleasing withal, that resistance to her fascination was difficult.

"I don't believe that Dorothy and I will ever be comrades," thought she more than once.

CHAPTER VIII

The next afternoon Andy came for Miss Marbury, but she had gone out with Dorothy and Mrs. Sims, so he contented himself by sitting on the porch with the Major, drinking a julep brewed by old Dick, who was an expert in the art.

"Does Dorothy like Miss Marbury?" asked the Major by the way of introducing the subject nearest his heart. Before replying Andy took another long sip of the julep, rooting his nose far down into the mint. With this refreshing draft he cast his eyes at the Major and replied reflectively:

"Dorothy will be very difficult to please; in truth, I doubt if anyone would suit her when the time came."

"I don't see why Dorothy doesn't accept some of her beaux, for she has a number of them; and some of them are good fellows."

Andy smiled over this, but it was some moments before he replied:

"Well," began he, "Dorothy and I are much alike in some respects. Now, I don't want her to marry until I do, and she doesn't want me to marry until she does; then, I don't want her to make a mistake. Married to the right man, she would be a happy woman, but married to the wrong man her life would be a chapter of miseries. Dorothy is stronger mentally than most men, and unless she married a very forceful man she would dominate him; and I believe

every woman is unhappy who dominates her husband."

At this the Major smiled and took another sip of his julep.

"I can't understand a man being dominated by his wife," said he, "yet I know that plenty of them are; and I agree with you, the woman who rules her husband is unhappily married, for strong as a woman may be, it is her nature to appeal to yet a stronger force. Then, too, Dorothy is a very proud woman, and demands a lot of a man. I don't know who would suit her exactly. But, Andy, you must not let Dorothy's failure to select a husband interfere with your marriage. Of all the women in the world, Martha is the one for you."

He would have continued his speech, and was about to do so when Andy interrupted:

"Yes, I know that; and just as soon as Martha will accept me and appoint the day we'll marry."

"She hasn't done that yet?"

"Oh, no! I have said nothing to her on the subject since she came, and don't intend to until she has been here some time and looked over the situation. But I feel certain that she intends to marry me; in fact, she has said as much."

"Don't take it so easily, Andy, for women are not like men; they desire hot pursuit. You must press her, press her to name the day."

"I think you are wrong, Major, for she is a strong character; has her own opinions, and desires to be treated just as I am doing. I know that."

The Major laughed at this, for it was not in con-

sonance with his views of courting a woman. He believed in the impetuous assault. Cupid must never be permitted to rest a moment, but continue shooting with his arrows every time the woman turned. He had done this as a young man, and believed it was the only way. Had he been a widower in search of another wife no doubt he would pursue that method.

"I have known women," continued he, "who were won over the suit of superior men by enthusiastic persistence. These men anticipated every wish of the woman and made themselves indispensable."

Andy shook his head slowly, replying:

"I wouldn't want such a woman; and the man who won by such methods won only to lose, for if he was not the natural choice of the woman she never was really his; and life becomes a mere existence to her. It is without happiness, and likely without contentment."

At this the Major laughed in a tone of incredulity, for while he realized there might be something in what Andy said, yet he mistrusted his ability to judge of such matters. Andy was a bachelor, so what could he know of the love of those who were married?

"We won't discuss it further, Andy, as I don't want to influence you against your judgment; but don't treat the matter too philosophically, for I tell you love is not so much a practical thing as it is a sentiment. It is the perfume of the flower and must be garnered in season, or forever lost."

This poetic speech of the Major's caused Andy to smile, but he said no more, feeling that his own views were correct.

"You took her through Darktown," continued Major, and showed her the unattractive portions of the city, and it made a very great impression upon her. She's been talking to me about it. She's a great idea of aiding the negro."

At this Andy was alert, and his eyes flashed across at Major as he said:

"Yes, I know that. She talked to me a good deal at Saratoga on the negro question, and we must let her see what the negro is, that she may understand the situation."

The Major waved his hands in token of his idea that there was no trouble about that, and replied rather jocularly:

"That will take care of itself. She must remain here at least a month or more, in which time she will see enough to give her an idea of the true situation."

Miss Marbury was now seen entering the yard from the sidewalk, having left Mrs. Sims and Dorothy at a neighbor's below. The Major and Andy arose, and as she approached the Major asked if she wouldn't join them in a julep.

"No, indeed! I do not believe in tippling. It's too dangerous."

"Dangerous!" responded the Major, with mock surprise. "I have been tippling for certainly forty-five years, and will tipple for forty-five more if I shall live so long; and I believe I'll do it if I can always have on hand a fine brand of whisky."

"But you never allow yourself to drink too much, at least now; but when younger I suppose you did:

and it will cut off your years." At this the Major chuckled and responded:

"Well, suppose it does cut off a few years at the other end of life? It has aided me greatly in enjoying my whole time. I am not selfish; I can give up something for the good that I have derived."

Miss Marbury stood and looked at him for a moment and then asked:

"Have you always lived as free of care as your life now seems to indicate?"

Smiling and bowing, he said with the air of a courtier:

"My greatest care has been to please my friends, and in that I have enjoyed myself almost every day of my life. True, I have had business cares, and have allowed them to worry me some, but not much. What I could not help I put aside. On the whole, however, I have reason to be content with what is behind me, and am satisfied with the present; while over the future hangs a rainbow as bright as it was in my youth."

Andy stood by smiling at the old gentleman, who was ever ready for anything. He had seen him in excited political meetings where his voice was raised sometime in eloquent defense, sometime in critical attack upon the methods of those in power. No matter where, nor the occasion, counting-room or drawing-room, he had always seen this old gentleman able to meet whatever might arise. Always decorous, he had never failed to command the respect and admiration of those opposed to him.

"By the way," finally said the Major, as if sud-

denly reminded of something, "I am going to have an old friend to dinner to-morrow night, General Woodville, an old companion in arms. You and Dorothy must not fail to come, Andy." Laughing gently he continued: "General Woodville, when the war first began, was sent to Mobile by the Governor, to help defend Fort Morgan. Woodville chartered a train and took his men there. They were all gentlemen of birth, education, and wealth, and when they arrived at Mobile, instead of going into camp, they all went to a hotel; and the next day when they moved out to the Fort they rode in carriages. That's the way the war began, and that was the idea the young fellows of that day had of war. The General now laughs about it, but for a long while afterward it was a very sore subject with him, for it retarded his promotion. Martha, he's an older man than I, and one of the rare gentlemen of the old school, as some might call him, whatever that may be; and you will sit and listen with your mouth open as he talks, for age has not withered him, nor time staled his infinite variety, as William Shakespeare said of Cleopatra." As he concluded his remarks the Major arose to go, thinking Andy and Miss Marbury would like to be alone. Andy didn't ask him to stay, for he really wanted to see Martha, and it never occurred to her why the Major was departing. Turning to Andy she asked:

"What have you been doing to-day?"

"Making money for you to spend," replied he, as he smiled and looked at her.

"Indeed?" said she satirically; and then continued

in the same tone: "I have sufficient to provide for all my wants."

"I never heard of a wife who had half enough," replied he merrily.

"Well, not being a wife, I cannot answer for that condition," sportively answered she, arching her brows and scanning his face at a glance.

"But you are to be my wife before long, and realizing how all women prod their husbands for money to spend, I am redoubling my pursuit of ready cash."

Miss Marbury looked away, with a smile flitting over her intense face, which Andy noticed, and at once he asked:

"Why do you look askance?"

Her brows again lifted and looking at him quizzically she replied:

"Askance? I was not aware that I was doing so."

"You were, and thereby hangs a meaning. I hope you are not forming an unfavorable impression of your future home."

A smile parted her rather thin lips and those opalescent eyes twinkled as they met his. He reached over to take her hand, gloved as it was, but she withdrew it as she said reprovingly:

"We haven't reached the holding hand stage, and then they are only to be held in private."

"I was not going to hold them, just give them a little squeeze," replied he, as he smiled upon her.

The appearance of Mrs. Sims and Dorothy, both of whom were in a merry mood over something that had occurred at the house of a neighbor where they had stopped, made further conference between Andy

and Miss Marbury impossible. In fact, Mrs. Sims and Dorothy took seats, not realizing that they were *de trop*. The Major returned to the front door and, seeing them, beckoned them to come in, but they manifested no disposition to do so. This brought him out, and for a time all chatted gleefully upon the incident Mrs. Sims and Dorothy brought out. Finally, the Major arched his brows, then, nodding to his wife and Dorothy, moved slowly toward the porch. He thought they would understand his meaning. Perhaps they did, but neither felt it necessary to take his command, and remained until it was time for Dorothy and Andy to go home.

CHAPTER IX

That evening Mr. Draper, Dorothy's ardent suitor, was to give, at the Country Club, a dinner complimentary to Miss Marbury. There would be a dozen present, and Dorothy deemed the occasion one to sound Miss Marbury upon her views of the negro, satisfied that she entertained sentiments that would jar all Southerners. The dinner being in a club, she felt that she could do this with propriety. Mr. Draper had asked Dorothy to place the cards. She seated Miss Marbury on Mr. Draper's right, placing him in the center, instead of at the head of the table. Just opposite she reserved her own seat. Andy was put on the end with the Major at the other, so that they would not be in a position to interfere with the hostilities being planned for. This would insure all hearing the conversation, and should it turn out as she expected, every one would learn fully of Miss Marbury's views upon the negro problem. Dorothy had duly considered the questions she would ask and the replies that would likely be given, and with the astuteness of a cross-examining attorney she had prepared to draw the witness out in full. She had even determined just when she would do this. The "band" was to be a feature of the dinner. It was composed of negroes, who played on various instruments, among which was a large tin can, upon the rim of which one whistled, and the deep resounding vessel gave forth something in the nature of

music. After this original band had concluded its performance, which included such dancing as cutting the pigeon-wing, knocking the double shuffle, cake-walking and the like, as well as singing old negro melodies, she would turn to this "Yankee school-marm" and spring the all-important questions.

As coffee was being served the "band" entered the room, and it was almost an hour before it departed. Then turning to Miss Marbury, and in a tone of innocent inquiry, Dorothy asked:

"I don't suppose, Miss Marbury, that you have ever seen the real negro as you have in the last few days?"

"No, I never have," responded Miss Marbury pleasantly, as she glanced up at her prospective sister-in-law.

"Those who have come here from New England," continued Dorothy, "have, to us, singular views of the negro. At first they seem to hold him rather superior to the whites, but later"—she now hesitated in order to emphasize what she was going to say—"they change their opinions so radically that we are amused. From social equals, which they virtually make of all negroes, they turn violently against them, and will not even have them as servants." Her tone was satirical, while her black eyes shone in animation.

Miss Marbury had no desire to be drawn into a discussion, and simply nodding an understanding of the subject, she turned to Mr. Draper. But Dorothy was not to be denied. Time had come for the battle, and begin it must. Raising her voice slightly, she continued:

"I notice in the papers that when noted negroes go north they are wined and dined by white people. I have always wondered if the food did not lose its savor, with a negro sitting by one's side?"

Andy frowned upon Dorothy and indicated to Miss Marbury by a glance that she was not to reply; but this spirited woman was not going to sit under fire in silence. Raising her head, she looked directly at Dorothy, who sat with a smile of challenge on her lips. That the nerves of each were drawn to the utmost tension there could be no doubt, yet both appeared at ease—even pleasant. Two men under the same circumstances would have glared at each other and wanted to fight, for when men become angry fury seems to concentrate in the fist; while with women, in the tongue. Man wants to pound his opponent to insensibility, while woman desires to flay the other with scientific precision. Man becomes a beast; woman a surgeon.

Dorothy had shown her claws a little too plainly, and it was apparent to all that she meant mischief. Andy therefore sprang to his feet, a signal for all to rise, but he was too late, as Miss Marbury was speaking, calmly, easily:

"I can assure you, Miss Whitfield, that the food tastes just the same; I have had personal experience in the matter more than once."

Dorothy laughed lightly, and throwing up her hands in mock astonishment, declared, as innocently as if speaking to a child she had unintentionally stepped upon:

"Oh, my, do pardon me! I had no idea I was

being personal." This hidden sneer was meant to conclude the battle, and others arose and joined Andy, who was still standing. But Miss Marbury was not willing the fight should close just at this time. The glint from those eyes, clear as the tear that seldom dropped from them, now met the twinkle from Dorothy's dancing, black orbs.

"We all have our prejudices," began Miss Marbury with suppression in her tone, "but I have none against the negro. On the contrary, he elicits my sympathy, and I feel justified in trying to aid him in his struggle to rise to better things. And if my presence at a table where he sits will do so, I feel glad of the opportunity to thus aid him." Quick as a flash came Dorothy's reply:

"Yes, all understand that the people of New England make a fetish of their sympathies for the negro. It's a pity the negroes cannot remove there to get the full benefit of it." Very nearly all had risen and now Dorothy and Miss Marbury arose. The Major's sonorous voice was heard to exclaim from the end of the table:

"Oh, it's a matter of environment. If I were in a foreign land I might be perfectly willing to sit at a table with an African prince, say, and eat such vituals as might be set before me." This produced a laugh, for all were willing to allow the matter to drop. Dorothy smiled and said satirically:

"In a foreign country with a prince!"

"If it's such an outrage to sit at a table with a negro, what difference does it make where it occurs or whom the person?" replied Miss Marbury quickly.

Dorothy turned her head toward her and in a gracious manner, yet with no more sympathy than can be found on an iceberg, replied:

"None at all, I suppose, for those who care for such an honor."

She tossed her head airily and laughed gently as she moved her chair back. Andy had now reached the side of Miss Marbury, and taking her arm moved away. As he did this he looked over at Dorothy, who smiled and appeared as innocent as a wren meekly perched upon her nest. In her heart, however, there was triumph. She had unmasked this "Yankee schoolmarm" who thought it proper to associate upon terms of social equality with the negro. For Dorothy still held to the law that breaking bread with one was the highest form of social equality. To take a seat at your table either elevated one to your rank or lowered you to his.

She fully realized that Miss Marbury's confession would mean this not only to those who heard it, but to the entire community. Wherever she went the eyes of the public would rest in contempt upon her, for all would look upon her as one attempting to break down the barriers existing between the two races.

The Major stood with Andy, Miss Marbury, Mr. Draper and one or two others who had joined them, so that it would not appear that sides were being drawn. Mrs. Sims sought Dorothy, and putting her arms around her scolded her pleasantly, trying to make a joke of it all. Dorothy laughed, but made no attempt to explain or apologize. None cared to

talk of the situation, yet the thought of each rested upon that discussion. All were astonished at Miss Marbury. While they understood that certain people North did invite celebrated negro men to their homes, it was thought that only those persons seeking notoriety did it; not those genteel, home-loving ones who know the negro question is a vital issue, and becoming more and more so all the time. Not only South but throughout the land.

We are tolerant of our own but not another's prejudices. In another they are a weakness; in us character. If Miss Marbury had realized that Southern people considered that dining with a negro meant that one not only favored social equality between the blacks and whites North and South, but miscegenation also, she would not have hesitated to express herself as she had done. Not that she favored these unnatural alliances, for Dorothy herself was no more strongly opposed to this than she. To her the admixture of bloods was horrible; and with those who believed miscegenation to be the solution of the negro question she had no sympathy whatever. To her a mongrel race represented degeneracy of both bloods, and she even desired to see the mulatto return to the black fold—and she thought this could be accomplished. But to her the South was blinded by prejudice, and its sentiments should be ignored. Andy knew her opinions, but had not discussed them with Dorothy, in which he had made a serious mistake. Explanation now would be too late, for the mischief had been done.

The Major nodded to his wife as an indication

that it was time to go home, and Mrs. Sims, going over to Miss Marbury, led the way to the dressing-room. Dorothy followed along with the others, and she and Miss Marbury confronted each other pleasantly as they put on their wraps, and when they took leave of each other it was with a formal bow and a pleasant "good night." Andy accompanied Miss Marbury in the carriage with Major and Miss Sims, while Mr. Draper escorted Dorothy home. Having no wish to go into the Major's, Andy requested that he be driven home first. He sat down and waited for Dorothy, who came in very shortly. She met his angry glance with a smile and stood waiting for his reprimand. It came, and for a time the debate was warm between them. Toward the close Dorothy looked at him and said with intense feeling:

"You, then, would be willing to marry a woman who regards a negro man as your equal, and who would not hesitate to marry him!"

This made Andy very indignant, and he tried to explain Miss Marbury's views, but Dorothy was in no humor to listen, and, tossing her head, laughed in a cold, satirical way and left him.

He paced the floor for a long time, for it was useless to retire. No sleep could come to one as greatly perturbed as was he. Miss Marbury had injured herself.

Neither the Major nor Mrs. Sims wished to discuss the matter with Miss Marbury before retiring, but she, on the contrary, was rather anxious to do so. Not for a moment had she realized the impression she had made upon those who had listened to

her. To know it would have astounded her. In her own section of the country nothing had been thought of sitting at table with noted negroes; on the contrary, many were anxious to meet them.

When Mrs. Sims went into Miss Marbury's room after putting on her wrapper, she found her pacing up and down. The smile that she assumed in talking to Dorothy had sunken into stern, set lines, and so deep that they did not at once recede.

"Dear, why don't you go to bed instead of pacing up and down here?" said Mrs. Sims, in a motherly way.

"Come and let me talk to you," responded Miss Marbury, advancing to her hostess.

"No," said she, "let's not talk to-night. Some other time. To-morrow say."

"Very well," replied Miss Marbury, but her tone indicated that she was not wholly agreed.

"I know you want to talk about Dorothy, and I know it's best not to do it."

"Yes, I wanted to ask you why she desired to start that subject—surely not one for a dinner." Mrs. Sims knew Dorothy's purpose, but did not care to declare it, and smilingly responded:

"Oh, Dorothy has her own views, and no one can control her."

"I take it," said Miss Marbury, "that it's an unheard of thing South for a white person to dine with a negro?"

Mrs. Sims laughed gently as she replied:

"Yes, Martha, that is never done South; it can't

be. But we'll not talk about it to-night, dear. I will talk to you about it to-morrow. Go to bed now, and to sleep. Good night."

Miss Marbury, however, did not go to bed for some time. Like Andy, she was thinking, thinking of the tremendous prejudices the Southern people have against the negro. She deemed it unworthy of them, and unjust, felt that it should be combated in the interest of rising generations, and that it was her duty, like that of all people desiring justice for the down-trodden, to say so, and show it by her conduct. She knew that Andy felt very keenly upon the question, for he had manifested it many times while at Saratoga, even exhibiting anger, but she had not realized the depth of his feeling, much less that of the entire South.

It was a long time before she sought her bed and then not to sleep. Her whole spirit was aroused.

CHAPTER X

The next morning Miss Marbury slept late, and when she awoke she found that Fronie had quietly come in and pulled the shades down to keep out the light. As she began to stir about Mrs. Sims entered and told her to put on her wrapper and come into her room, where they would have breakfast served to them. The Major, as was his custom, had arisen early, taken his breakfast, and was either strolling in the yard or had gone to his office.

Mrs. Sims did not care to discuss Dorothy's conduct even yet, and was very glad that Miss Marbury did not refer to it. The Major's wife would necessarily be compelled to inform Miss Marbury what her admissions of the night before had meant to her Southern hosts. This Mrs. Sims did not wish to do, as she knew Miss Marbury would be astonished—even angered. Indeed, she feared it might make Martha's further stay unsatisfactory, if not altogether impossible. She knew, too, that not one of the ladies present at the dinner, nor any of those in the city, would think of calling now, except out of regard for her and the Major. Even as it was, their calls would be short and not repeated with undue haste while her guest remained. She had had quite a conversation with the Major upon the subject, but he laughed over it, pretending that no one would pay any attention to it. Yet he was worried over it and feared it sounded the death-knell of his hopes—the

marriage of Miss Marbury and Andy. He did not think it would deter Andy in his purpose, since he would be willing to defy public opinion to marry the woman he loved,—believing that after she understood the situation she would come around to his views. It was Miss Marbury that gave the Major concern. He knew that once she realized the feeling entertained for her owing to her opinions she would not for a moment consider marrying Andy, nor of making her home in the South. It would be impossible. Not given to worrying, he smiled as he walked through his flowers and thought of Dorothy's sparkling eyes as she forced the issue; and as he thought of the spirit exhibited by Miss Marbury he clapped his hands merrily. The next moment, however, the smile fled as he realized what Andy must have felt. The Major was more than ever determined that the marriage should occur; and he thought it certain, provided Miss Marbury could be induced to remain South for at least two months, by which time she would perceive what the negro problem was, and from a viewpoint she had never held before. As he thought of the dinner he was going to give that evening to General Woodville, his big face was wreathed in smiles. The old General was a very plain-spoken man, and had very pronounced views. Should Miss Marbury repeat that she had dined with negroes, the General would from politeness retain his seat, but his exhibition of astonishment would likely be ludicrous. Then he wondered if Dorothy would come over, but at the very thought he laughed, knowing

full well that she would not. This indeed proved to be the case, for shortly before the hour for dinner Dorothy telephoned her regrets to Mrs. Sims, stating that Andy must needs represent both himself and her at the Sims house.

When Andy appeared at the drawing-room at the Major's he was met by the Major and General Woodville, and in a moment Mrs. Sims and Miss Marbury came in. No others had been invited. Mrs. Sims had told the Major of Dorothy's message, so that he would not ask for her when Andy came in. But Andy, thinking it best to account for Dorothy's absence, apologized for her non-appearance, stating that she was not feeling well and had retired. He was afraid to look at Miss Marbury when he said this for fear her discerning eye would see that he was not telling the truth. If she looked at him he did not know it, and the Major quickly responded by saying he had heard that Dorothy was not feeling well, and expressed his regrets. In a few moments dinner was announced, and they had scarcely taken seats when Major, who was bent upon educating Miss Marbury upon the Southern views of the negro question, turned to General Woodville and asked about his crops. This was sure to lead to the labor and the negro question. General Woodville sat opposite Miss Marbury and looked very distinguished, with his long, white hair, falling almost to his shoulders. He was a tall, soldierly looking man, and although seventy years of age, possessed extraordinary vigor. His complexion was ruddy, his eyes clear, and his voice strong and resolute. He still lived in the

country, maintaining the great plantation his ancestors had lived on for a century or more. With him there still remained a great many negroes whom he had owned as slaves, besides many of their descendants. His plantation was in south Georgia, and the negroes outnumbered the whites in that community in the proportion of 10 to 1. The General replied that his crops were all good. He would make an average yield of cotton, and get twelve cents a pound for it. His peach and melon crops had been excellent. He looked prosperous and happy, and was optimistic upon all questions, unless indeed it was that of the negro. About this he had grave doubts, fearing not the present, but the results to be worked out in time. When the facts were brought out about the proportion of negroes to whites upon the General's plantation, Miss Marbury inquired eagerly:

"Do you get along harmoniously when negroes so exceed in population?"

"Oh, yes, yes; we have no trouble; that is, my negroes and I—I always call them mine, because if I didn't look after them I don't know what would become of them—we get along all right. Now and then, however, one of the young bucks gets at cross purposes with some of the white neighbors, when the whole neighborhood takes it up. Our people must learn more patience with the negro; he hasn't our training, and is not accountable, in strict morals and integrity, as we are. We are too prone to take things in our own hands and settle them then and there without appealing to the courts." Miss Marbury

was all interest, and at this point interrupted with the question:

"Are the whites becoming more tolerant of the weaknesses of the negro, and restrain themselves, or not?"

"They are in the cities, I think," replied Andy; "but, General, how are they in the country?"

The old General smiled, and for a time was quiet, then said very solemnly:

"In the cities you are better policed; and the negro, who is absolutely controlled by fear, is held in check; but in the country, where we have practically no officers, their only fear is the violence of the whites. The whites realize this is true, and of course are not inclined to be patient. In fact, they fear patience. They want the negro to act as they do; and when he doesn't they are rather inclined to take the law in their own hands. It will be a long time, too, before they will act differently. You understand a man in the country wants to feel safe, wants his family protected, and his property secure. He will not tolerate theft or any serious violation of the law by the negroes."

"But," interrupted Miss Marbury, "where the whites are so outnumbered, as in your section, it looks as if the negroes would have the power to control."

The Major's mellow voice was heard, as he laughed and then began:

"My dear, before the war it was a common saying that a Southerner could whip ten Yankees;—General Woodville and I can testify that that statement

was not true;—but it has not in the least lessened our opinion of ourselves. Every white man feels that he is the equal in courage and force to any twenty negroes. Of course he isn't,—with the negro armed and equipped as well as the white man; but that a few whites can hold their position against an army of blacks there is no doubt whatever. But I don't intend to assert that the negro is lacking in physical courage, for they fight each other with desperation; but the whites compose the ruling class, form the courts, juries, and are the law-makers; this the blacks realize, and it aids the whites to continue in their domination of the country."

"That's about right!" exclaimed General Woodville, "and I think it will always remain so."

For a time no one spoke, when Miss Marbury looked up at General Woodville and said, with feeling:

"I think it is a great pity that the whites are not willing to let the law take its course instead of lynching negroes who do wrong."

"We all think that, too," replied Andy, "and do our best to prevent it; but I doubt if we will ever be able to control the matter."

"For all crimes, except one, perhaps," asserted General Woodville, "the law should take its course; for lynching is contrary to civilization. But when a negro brute enters a man's home he may expect to be lynched, and he is fortunate to escape burning."

This was pretty strong, and Miss Marbury's eyes flashed. To her lynching was barbarous, no matter who did it, nor for what crime.

"I am opposed to lynching in the abstract," began Major, "and so are those very planters who are surrounded by negroes in proportion of ten to one; but when the foulest of crimes is committed upon my own kin or upon my neighbors, abstract views cease to control, and the desire to destroy the defiler rises supreme over every other feeling. Vengeance becomes a virtue, and the whole community rises as a man. This would likely be true under the same conditions in any section of this country, perhaps in any part of the globe. Certainly, it would be true in every section that holds women as high as she is held here."

Miss Marbury made no reply, but her cheeks were flushed and those earnest eyes scanned every face. Looking at her, General Woodville remarked solemnly:

"Miss Marbury, I am one of those who contend that lynching for certain crimes is not only right, but that it exhibits the very highest form of civilization in us."

Miss Marbury's eyes as well as her face took on an expression of unutterable surprise. She did not have to ask what he meant, for her every feature did that. The old General smiled as he accepted her look of interrogation and continued:

"The race that will submit to the ignominy of another race defiling its women hasn't the courage or ability to exist!"

"But the law!" exclaimed Miss Marbury, excitedly.

The General waved her off with his hand and continued:

"Law is inadequate; it is too slow and uncertain. Then, too, it subjects the helpless women to public inquiry, before which they all quail. In fact, no modest woman can submit to it; and the brute would often escape if the courts only were appealed to. We put the savages on notice that an action of this sort means death—speedy, certain death! We do it with that boldness born of conviction of right, and with the determination that no force on this earth shall prevent! It is the instinct of one of the highest qualities of the Caucasian race, and upon it we are willing to be judged by the world! The sentiment is chivalric, and its origin began with man's reverence for women; and when that feeling becomes tame and insipid the race will be unworthy!"

Miss Marbury had never heard lynching so boldly approved in this form, nor arguments so plausibly asserted; but she could not agree to it. Looking at General Woodville she now said firmly, but pleasantly:

"Lynching is barbarous and belongs to uncivilized ages. The law should govern."

All sat quietly and waited for a response from the General:

"Ah, my dear Miss Marbury, I realize the prejudice violence engenders in those who have lived at peace for centuries, and with what horror they look upon the vengeance meted out by an individual. That feeling is right; it is one endorsed throughout the world; but at the same time those very sections, should they be invaded by an alien race burdened with the instincts of savages, and their very civiliza-

tion imperiled, would be the first to rise and strike with all the power that God had given them in defense of their homes! If they did not they would be blotted from existence! Whole communities are now and then aroused to a man and destroy life and property in the assertion of their manhood. It is a token that the courage and vigor of the race are still alive, and can be relied upon when the emergency arises. It is the Godlike element in the race!"

Miss Marbury was too intent to smile over this peroration of the General, and did not care to provoke further discussion upon the point, yet she was by no means convinced. The training of centuries was not to be changed by a strong speech of a few moments. Perhaps, it never could be changed, for environment counts for almost as much as blood. To change the drift of the conversation, Mrs. Sims asked the General:

"Do you believe in educating the negroes?"

The old General smiled as he replied:

"Well, I have my opinions upon that subject, and I know that they are not the accepted ones in this section, or in any part of the country; but I believe it is a mistake at the present time to educate the negro. He's a servant, and he's to remain so; and any education that begets an ambition to rise above one's class is fundamentally wrong, both to him and to the public. Teach the negro a little Greek, do you suppose he'll farm after that, or work as a blacksmith or a carpenter? Never. He must go to town where he can air his learning and forge someone's name to show that he can write. The peni-

tentiary is filled with such. In the old countries people are not taught to aspire above the class to which their fathers belonged. If one's father was a bootmaker, the sons' naturally go to that trade; they don't aspire to become bankers or members of Parliament. It is my opinion that the best education we can give the negro is that the English give their working people. It produces contentment as well as the best form of workingmen in the world. Why educate, if it is to bring dissatisfaction? Why, one of my neighbors, who is a small farmer, sent his daughter to college—with what result? She was educated above her class in the community and was unhappy. Nothing would do her but go to town. She was lost to her family, and practically lost to herself, for she was unfitted for work, and she finally died a disappointed, broken-hearted woman. My idea is that we are trying to progress too fast in certain directions; our schoolhouses are hotbeds that are destroying more people than they are benefiting. We are stripping the country of young men and young women and filling the towns with idlers; increasing crime and lowering the standard of morality. I am considered an old foggy, and people smile at my views, but it doesn't affect me in the least, for I feel that I am right. I would educate all children to a certain degree—let all be able to read, write, and cipher; but when it is carried above the wants of any class it results in their destruction. The old Latin maxim of *festina lente* is still the embodiment of wisdom, not only in legislation but in education."

Major Sims laughed and exclaimed:

"When a countryman, whether white or black, can say *hic, haec, hoc, hujus, hujus, hujus*, the plow and the anvil cease to attract him, eh?"

"Oh, yes," replied the General; "he can no longer plow and use such terms as gee and haw; he must carry an umbrella and wear gloves. He must be a boss."

Major Sims now chose to take the conversation to another subject, and turning to Miss Marbury, he said:

"Martha, General Woodville and I were young men together, and used to play the gallant at summer resorts." Turning to General Woodville he chuckled as he continued: "Wood, do you remember the summer we went to Greenbrier White Sulphur?"

The General laughed and replied:

"Yes, I can never forget that, for that is one of the times when you and I cut pretty small figures."

Miss Marbury expressing a desire to hear this, General Woodville deferred to Major, who now told the story:

"Wood and I had been to Saratoga and other resorts, where we had made considerable display, as we carried our horses and servants along and had plenty of money. Concluding that we would give Greenbrier the benefit of our presence, we took his father's carriage as well as a coachman, and with two outriders upon two beautiful saddle horses that we expected to use when we reached the Springs, we started through the country. When we arrived we created some sensation, it is true. That evening

when Wood and I entered the ball-room, dressed as stylishly as we had ever seen anyone, you can't imagine our astonishment when we perceived the young sprigs from Charleston,—who dominated the resort that summer,—enter in their claw-hammer coats, white vests, plaited shirts, and white linen collars, with a small dress bow, similar to the one of the present, and white kid gloves and low quartered shoes. We would have laughed at the sight had there not been so many dressed like that, and had they not been the leaders. As it was, we looked on for a time, when Wood looked at me out of one eye and whispered: 'Where the devil did they get them?' The leader of this set was Count De Choiseul, then consul from France at Charleston. His father had married in Charleston, and he was certainly about the most stylish youngster that I had ever seen, and had given to the young men of Charleston the latest styles from Paris. Everything was the newest, and Wood and I had never seen them before. We had on boots, and think how we looked in them, with our stocks and reps vests in comparison with those young sprigs with their linen collars and white gloves and low quartered shoes." Laughing, he continued: "Our trip was not a success. We were not up to date, but you can rest assured we were ready that winter. We startled Augusta and other Georgia towns to which we went. We saw the waltz, too, for the first time in our lives at Greenbrier—brought over by this young Count, and by him taught to his friends in Charleston. We learned it and carried it home; but we had a time in getting it adopted, as the

old people objected to it. But those days, Wood, those days, weren't they great!"

Mrs. Sims laughed as she exclaimed:

"I never shall forget how you looked the first time I saw you both in the new evening clothes."

"What did you drink in those days?" asked Andy.

"Oh, in those days we drank brandy juleps, for whisky was unknown except as a drink for our negroes. At table we had madeira and sherry. Champagne, we had, at times; but it was not very popular; and only cost two dollars a bottle. Ice was not plentiful in those days, and the champagne was served only slightly chilled, and in a dining-room the popping of corks sounded like the firing of pickets. The great amusements of the day were dancing and riding horseback. We fox-hunted considerably, and as every planter raised fast horses almost every community had a race-track, and we indulged in speeding these beautiful animals, with usually a wager put up to add zest to the occasion."

General Woodville did not remain long after dinner, and Andy and Miss Marbury were left to themselves by Major and Mrs. Sims. For a time both were somewhat constrained, Andy desiring to urge her to name the day when she would become his wife, while she did not wish him to do so. The spirit of the missionary in her had not abated in the few days she had been South, forcing love into a back seat. Of old Abolitionist stock, she believed it her duty to carry on the work that her ancestors had begun when they joined in the battle-cry of freedom for the slaves. She did not believe they were

yet free. After talking on general topics for a time he looked into her eyes and he finally asked:

"Martha, are you ready to name the day when we shall marry?"

"No, Andy; not yet. Wait until I have been here a little longer," replied she solemnly.

"I fear that you are going from me instead of toward me. You're allowing your feelings on the negro question to destroy your love. Dismiss that and let's marry, and together we will aid the negro in his upward course."

She arose and, trying to smile, said a little hoarsely, for she was nervous:

"Please, Andy, say no more about that for the present.

She offered her hand as an indication for him to go. He looked astonished, and hesitated to take it. She realized his feelings and wanted to explain, but her tongue refused to move. There was no explanation further than the fact that she wanted him to go. Their eyes met and, realizing that she wished to be alone, he took her hand, while his face gave every indication that she had wounded him. She realized this, yet still she felt it impossible to explain, and now simply said "good night." He repeated the words and, turning, walked deliberately from the room.

CHAPTER XI

Many hours passed that night before Miss Marbury closed her eyes, for she rehearsed the events of the day, as well as the day before. When she arose the next morning her mind was still upon the subject of the negro. She could not dismiss it. Standing in the middle of the room she announced loudly, as if she had reached a conclusion:

"If the negro should be educated and refined, his nature would change; and the whites, having respect for him, would cease to consider him as a servant only, and accord him all the rights due him. There would then be no occasion for prejudice or conflict. That the negro can become the equal of the whites in intelligence and refinement I have no sort of doubt; and it's the duty of the whites to see that he receives these benefits. He is our brother, and should receive a brother's part."

As she began to dress she reflected over what her course should be, for the determination to do something had seized her. She had very recently inherited a large fortune from her great uncle, who had made it mining in the Far West. It had come as a great surprise to her. She had said nothing to Andy nor the Major about it, her intention being that Andy should not know it until the day they married. Her idea now was that this money ought to be used for a great end, and upon it she was willing to draw liberally for the purpose. "This may be the hand of

Providence," mused she. Fronie came in to assist her in dressing, but she wanted no company, nothing but her thoughts, and sent Fronie out. Having at last completed her toilet, she looked into the mirror at herself and stood for a moment, then asked aloud: "What shall I say to Andy?" The question was not answered.

The afternoon of that day, as she came in from a walk, she observed Andy sitting in the yard waiting for her. She had gone toward Darktown and had strolled along the streets quietly examining everything from a distance, for she did not enter any of the houses. The wretchedness that presented itself to her eyes awoke great sympathy for this benighted race, and as she slowly returned to the Major's she was reflecting upon what to do. Andy called to her as she entered the gate. Going directly toward him, she took her seat by him on the rustic bench. He smiled upon her as he asked:

"Where have you been?"

"Darktown," responded she lightly, as her brows arched significantly. He did not realize whether she was jesting or in earnest, and said rather facetiously:

"Keep out of Darktown, or you will regret it."

"I have been all through it, and experienced no difficulty," replied she, tossing her head. He was astonished at her speech, and very gravely shook his head. Before he could say anything, if he intended to, she continued: "I want to talk to you about General Woodville's views on the education of the negro. You do not agree with him, do you?"

Andy laughed as he replied:

"Still harping on the negro, hey?"

"Yes, I admit my whole being is aroused. Tell me candidly your view on education," said she.

Andy glanced at her in an amused way as one would at a child asking the explanation of something that the parent considered beyond its ken, then said:

"Martha, the negro question is infinitely more complicated than you can imagine. At present it's comparatively simple, but what will it be a century or so from now if the negro is educated as well as the white, possessed of property and all that goes to give influence and power? Numerically as great as the whites in this section, can you not see that we are creating a condition that is liable to be too big for our country to solve without a terrific struggle?"

"I do not believe it," replied she excitedly. "We of to-day must look after the conditions of the day, and those who come after us centuries from now will be able to take care of themselves."

"That's the argument of those," replied he, "who captured the savages in Africa and brought them here as slaves. See what they did, and what they have left us? My God! What a mistake was made! It was made then for the money there was in it, and now you want to continue the mistake for the humanity involved. Our forefathers sowed the seeds of disunion when they left the Constitution open for construction,—perhaps a necessity in order to form any government at all,—and the result was the Civil

War. It was brought on by the necessity for an understanding of that instrument—a necessity occasioned by the negro. Is he to be the cause of eternal strife?”

“There is no cause for alarm,” exclaimed she earnestly. “Educating and refining the negro will settle the problem.”

“When the negro,” began Andy, “is educated, refined, and possessed of property he will be in a position to demand equality; with equality comes intermarriage; with intermarriage a mongrel race. The South, being largely populated by negroes, will feel it most. I fear that it will become the despised spot of the country, for mongrel blood is hated throughout the world.”

Miss Marbury turned and looked at him intently for a moment and then asked:

“Then what is the solution of the negro problem?”

Andy shook his head and smiled as he replied:

“Colonization; but at present it seems impracticable.”

“What do you consider is the real negro problem?” asked she, as she scanned his face that was now so intense with feeling.

“The negro problem?” repeated he, looking away as if for an answer. “Well, I don’t know that I can state it clearly and fully, but it is something like this: How can two distinct races, differing in color, habits, instincts, and aspirations, continue to work in peace, side by side, when the struggle for life is growing fiercer and fiercer? When one, the white, is a proud, dominant race, glorying in its past

achievements, and spurning all other races as inferior; while the other, the black, just out of barbarism, burdened with the instincts of the savage, and holding its own blood in contempt, demands equality with the white race?"

A moment's silence followed this statement, for both were reflecting over it. Before either spoke they saw an old shabbily dressed negro woman entering the side gate. It was old Harriet. She was some sixty years old, but strong and vigorous; and her keen, ferret-like eyes, long face, and high cheek bones indicated she might have Indian blood in her veins. This was said of her, but whether it was a fact or not none knew.

"Well, Harriet, what is it?" called Andy.

Coming forward, Harriet smiled and curtsied as she replied:

"Nuttin'. I des drapped in to see the Major es I wus passin'."

Harriet was quite a character in the community, and so combative in her nature that she was feared by almost all black people. She was one of the noted cooks of the city, and one of those called "old-time darkies." She had little or no patience with the younger set of negroes who aped the styles and manners of the white people. Thinking he might have some fun out of her for Miss Marbury's benefit, Andy concluded to engage her in conversation, and to do so began to question her about herself, that her characteristic replies might be heard.

"Is that bad boy of yours in jail again?" inquired he.

"Who, General Sherman? No, sah; he's bin right good since I got him outen jail de las' time; an' he better be, too, for I's gwine ter let him stay dar de nex' time he gits in. Dat I is!"

Miss Marbury smiled at the serious manner of the old woman; and the idea of her having a son named General Sherman was diverting.

Andy continued:

"You are right; there's no use in your working yourself to death to pay him out of jail. Where did he get his badness? You are law-abiding and so is his daddy, John Wood."

"Law! John Wood ain't his pa; General Grant's his pa."

"Oh, General Grant, your first husband!"

Old Harriet chuckled and shook her head as she replied:

"Huc! He warn't my fus' husband. No, sah; he wus de third."

"The Third?" echoed Andy, as though astonished. "Why, how many have you had?"

"Huc! I bin had seben."

She said this so naturally and drolly that Miss Marbury could not restrain a laugh, and then exclaimed earnestly:

"All dead?"

"Huc! None o' 'em dade."

"Why, Harriet, the law will be getting after you!" said Andy facetiously.

"De law? Huc! Ef hit ain't got nuttin' better to do den to pester wid sech as me an' de triflin' husbands I's had, it sho' is pushed up."

This situation of affairs astonished Miss Marbury, and she sat looking in wonder at this old woman, and finally asked:

"Is it possible that you are not divorced from all of them?"

Old Harriet shook her head and, chuckling, replied in her quaint way:

"No, miss, I ain't 'vo'ced fum none o' 'em. I des let's 'em go an' I teck up wid anudder, jes as deh do."

Miss Marbury looked at Andy in astonishment, and wanted to ask if such a state of affairs was permitted; but he was smiling and treating the matter lightly. Old Harriet now said:

"Is Miss Sue here?"

"Yes; won't you go in and see her?" responded Andy.

"No, sah; I des axed. I'll be knockin' 'long. Good day to you."

With this she gave an old-time curtsey to both and slowly moved off; but she hadn't gone more than a few steps when she turned, suddenly.

"Uh—Mr. Andy," began she, as though it had just occurred to her, "do you know o' any o' our fo'ks who wants a cook?"

"Oh, you are going back to cooking? No, I don't believe I do, Harriet; but if I hear of any one wanting a good cook I'll let you know. Where do you live?"

"I libs in Peavine Alley."

"Peavine Alley?" echoed he, looking at Miss Marbury and smiling.

"Ev'ry nigger knows whar dat is. You des send for Harriet Grant, Peavine Alley, and I'll git it."

"Harriet Grant!" exclaimed Andy. "Why, Jim, your husband, is named Simpson; I know his people."

"Huc! I didn't change my name when I married him. No, sah, I made my repeltation as Grant, an' poses to keep it."

Miss Marbury's eyes and Andy's met in a look of amusement which old Harriet noticed, but it had no effect upon her; and again she turned and started away as Andy said:

"All right, I'll send word to you if I hear of any one."

When she had taken a few steps, she stopped once more and, looking back, announced emphatically:

"I doan want to cook fur anybody but our fo'kes; dem whut knows how things aire."

"All right, all right; I know what you mean," replied Andy, smiling at Miss Marbury, who immediately asked:

"What does she mean by that?"

"Why, she means many things," began he; "but one is that she's to carry the pantry keys, and be permitted to take what she wants to entertain her friends." Such a thing as this Miss Marbury had never heard of, and her face now betokened her astonishment. "Yes," continued Andy, noticing this, "that's a part of the custom here. You see, we pay small wages and allow them to have their friends dine at our expense."

"I don't understand your treatment of the negro," said Miss Marbury, in a tone of discontent.

"Yes," began Andy, in his jocular way, "you think you can come here and reform the negro by teaching him, as Major says, '*hic, haec, hoc, hujus, hujus, hujus*, and such preaching as he will listen to." While he said this agreeably its effect upon Miss Marbury was not pleasant, for it was critical; and now she replied a little tartly, although smiling:

"Don't you think you people here follow the lines of least resistance instead of pursuing a well-conceived plan for the proper teaching of the negro?"

Andy laughed at this. It was the suggestion from one whom, he considered, knew nothing whatever of the real negro problem, and of the best way to meet it."

"Martha," began he, "the Mississippi might be changed from its channel which nature has given it, by canals and the like, but assuredly, the works of man would be swept away by the first great freshet, and the river would resume its natural course. To attempt to change the habits and general character of millions of negroes scattered over various States, upon lines thought out by man instead of pursuing the natural drift made by centuries, would be more futile than to change all the great streams of the country. If you could begin with the negro, as you do with a child, teaching everything as new, perhaps some system could be devised; but you must understand the negro race has been forming its habits during the thousands of years it has existed; and to attempt to change

them suddenly, by education or any system man could devise, would be utterly futile. The negro is improving daily, doing it through education, somewhat; but far more through imitation of the whites. Now, while Harriet quits her husbands without getting a divorce—as divorces were not required in slavery times—you will understand that cases like hers at the present day are rare. Negroes now marry and get divorces as the whites do; yet marriage is not as sacred a matter with them as it is with the white people. It never has been from the beginning of time, and to prosecute them for not conforming to our law in all particulars would be to fill our jails and penitentiaries with them—where there are enough already, the Lord knows, for graver crimes. If the whites chose, they could imprison one-half of the negro race, virtually restoring them to the state of slavery. Instead of doing that we tolerate their vices, knowing that in time they will improve and become more moral.”

“Well, one thing is sure,” remarked Miss Marbury in deliberation, “we view the negro from a different standpoint and——”

Andy interrupted quickly exclaiming:

“Oh, no doubt of that. The fact is, there are two standpoints. In the South we like the negro as an individual, but as a race we hold it in contempt; while you care nothing for the negro as an individual, but as a race you esteem it highly, and want to elevate it beyond its capacity.”

Turning toward him those wonderful eyes, she said resolutely:

"However true that may be as an abstract proposition, as an individual I believe in the capacity of the negro race, and feel that I should do all I can for its uplifting."

Andy dropped his eyes as he reflected. It was very evident that she was allowing her feelings for the negro race to consume her love for him. He did not grow angry over it, but became more determined than ever to win her. He would give her all the time necessary, if she would take it. Raising his eyes to her, he said very feelingly:

"Martha, do you ever give me a thought now?"

She smiled for the first time in days, was even coquettish as she replied:

"Yes, I think of you often."

The fact was she did and had struggled to surrender her convictions concerning the uplifting of the negro that she might give all her consideration to Andy. But she could not do it. At times it pained her to think that her love was growing cold, and when she thought how he would feel if she should tell him so, she felt as guilty as one who had committed a crime.

The Major now joined them and asked about Dorothy. Andy blushed, but tried to appear natural when he replied:

"Dorothy has been quite busy, and having a cold has remained indoors."

While it was only three days since the dinner at which the two women had had their little discussion, it seemed like a long time to Andy, and he felt that his sister's failure to call would be noted. As he

spoke Miss Marbury had looked at him, trying to read his real meaning. The fact that Dorothy had not come to see her since that fateful evening, when she had been every day before, even twice a day, was proof positive that she intended her absence to be noticed. The Major, fearing Miss Marbury might press matters further respecting Dorothy, changed the subject at once by asking for Mr. Draper. Andy smiled and said:

"He called last night to see Dorothy, and I am of the opinion that she has about made up her mind to accept him, and I hope she will."

"Oh, you want her to accept him?" exclaimed Miss Marbury interestedly.

"Yes," replied Andy; "he's a fine fellow, and I'd like to see him and Dorothy married."

"So would I," exclaimed the Major earnestly.

Andy now arose, saying that he had promised Dorothy to come home to dinner, and took his leave.

CHAPTER XII

Early the next morning Miss Marbury excused herself from Mrs. Sims and took another walk, going into another part of the city where the negroes lived. She was unwilling, as yet, to call upon any of them, particularly as she didn't know the leading ones, and contented herself with walking along the sidewalk, occasionally stopping to talk to the little ragged urchins who stood looking in wonder upon her. "God's image in ebony!" exclaimed she gently as she patted a little black Guinea boy upon his woolly head. The boy's eyes were bright, and his face strong, and she thought she could see that with training he could be the equal of any white boy. The uncleanness of the squalid houses and the lack of everything that makes home attractive she perceived, while now and then she would hear expressions from the children, as well as their mothers, that shocked her refined ear. Meeting two strapping, black, coarse negro men, who stopped and boldly glared at her, she quailed, then quickened her step. The men turned and pursued her slowly. She didn't know this until she came to a cross street, where she halted to consider which way to go, and happening to look back saw them. Seeing a very nice-looking house in the block, she moved toward it, but before she reached it the negro men had stopped. Looking over her shoulder, she noticed this and now quietly strode on toward home. It had been a shock, and

for a time it unnerved her, but by any by she concluded that she had been foolish, that the men had meant nothing more than surprise, perhaps, in seeing her in those quarters; and maybe intended only to see that she found her way home. She didn't mention the circumstance to the Major nor to Andy: she feared to do so. But she had no idea of allowing it to interfere with her investigations. She now decided to obtain the names of some of the leading negro men and women, that she might have a conference with them to learn their views upon what was necessary to elevate their race. But to whom to go she was in doubt. She did not feel like asking the Major or Mrs. Sims, and of course it wouldn't do to ask Andy. It occurred to her to ask Uncle Dick, but then he would be certain to speak of it to the Major. Finally she exclaimed to herself: "Fronie! I can get it out of Fronie!" And in a few minutes after she reached her room Fronie entered and at once she questioned her.

"Fronie, who is the leading man of your race in Atlanta?" The girl looked at her in surprise, and for a moment seemed at a loss what to answer, then said, hesitatingly:

"Do you mean among the politicians or the church?"

"Both," answered Miss Marbury.

"Well, mum, deh's two bishops. Bishop Gately and Bishop Simpson, one's a Methodist, other Episcopalian; and among the politicians there's a lot of 'em, but I don't know 'em. There's two who hold offices under the Government; one Mr. Raney, and

the other, Mr. Martin. Then there's one or two doctors, Dr. Griffin and Dr. Maddox, who stand well."

Miss Marbury didn't care to ask where they lived or to seem specially interested, and asked no more; but she made a note of the names and what they did, determined to get into communication with them.

Later in the day Mrs. Sims and Miss Marbury called upon the Major at his office. They rode down in the street car, being the first time that Miss Marbury had done so since her arrival. She saw the negroes sitting in the rear seats only, and finally noticed a sign at the front end of the car. "Negroes will sit to the rear; whites in front." She made no remark upon this to Mrs. Sims, but reflected over it, deeming it a very harsh regulation, a humiliation placed upon the negro. When she stood in front of the elevator in the office building which the Major's company occupied, she saw a sign over the elevator, "This car for whites only." She was tempted to walk into one bearing no notice, and into which she saw negroes going, but was restrained by the presence of Mrs. Sims, who might object. That evening at the theater, when she discovered that negroes were forced to go into a certain corner in the balcony, not being allowed anywhere else, her indignation was so keen that she could not take any interest in the play. Andy was sitting by her, and was in a gale of delight; but to his witticisms she gave little heed. He noticed her absorption and inquired the cause, but received no answer. At supper afterwards in the ladies' dining-room of the club he again

pressed her to know why she was so serious, but without avail. Although there were several present whom she had just met, she found it impossible to join in the conversation. Her sense of right had been outraged by what she had seen that day and that evening,—a race humiliated publicly by placards. To her it was a part of the scheme to keep the negro humiliated, and to manifest the contempt the whites had for him. Such was her resentment that she slept but little that night, worrying over the situation of the down-trodden negro. He had been given liberty for what? Citizenship for what? Chinamen, Filipinos, Japanese, Indians,—all could ride in the cars or in the office building elevators with whites—all but the poor negro; he must not. To her there could be no excuse for this. The next morning when she asked Fronie about these things, and found also that negroes had separate churches, and none of them ever thought of entering a white church, she was still more disturbed. True, she discovered from Fronie that there was no resentment felt by the negroes over the matter, except that they were not allowed to take vacant seats in the cars which might exist in front when all of the rear seats were crowded; but Fronie quickly explained that this didn't occur often—usually on Sunday nights only, when a great many negroes were riding in the cars.

Martha had an engagement to drive that afternoon with Andy, and had feared he would then ask her to marry him. Should he do so it would force her to tell him that all had changed. She had seen

enough of the conditions existing in the South respecting the negro to convince her that she could never live there in peace. She could never submit to the inequalities imposed upon the blacks by the dominant whites. It was unjust, it was cruel. The latest fires of the old Abolitionists were again aflame in her blood, and she felt as they did,—that the negro must be freed. He was still a slave, manacled, if not by chains, by the humiliating restrictions with which the whites chose to bind him. Her ancestors had felt that human bondage was wrong, and she now felt that any restrictions made upon the negro on account of his color was equally wrong; and that it was her duty to begin the crusade that should give him equality of rights with all. All day she meditated over it, and both the Major and Mrs. Sims found her a very uninteresting visitor. The Major twitted and badgered her, but to no purpose, as she concluded it best not to speak her convictions. She would wait yet a little longer, and, if possible, find the reasons for these harsh rules she had observed. She looked over a list of the leading negroes Fronie had given her, and cogitated some time upon some method by which she could have a talk with one or more of them. Surely they did not approve of these restrictions and humiliations, and would join her in effort to have them abolished. As she sat in her room she heard a gentle tap upon her door, and in response to the invitation to come in Fronie entered with a tall, lank, black woman, so slovenly clothed and so untidy that Miss Marbury recoiled; and when Fronie informed her that this was the washerwoman



she had brought, Miss Marbury felt disposed to say that she would postpone having anything laundered until the next week. This freak of a human being stood looking upon her in curiosity, and said patronizingly:

"Honey, you's fum de Norf, whar we collud ladies is tuck right up wid de whites, ain't yer?"

The woman advanced as she said this until she came very near Miss Marbury, who arose and retreated. Miss Marbury was at a loss for a reply, and without making any whatever, she looked at Fronie and said firmly:

"I'll have nothing done to-day, Fronie; and I am very busy now;" and turning she walked from the room. She did not return till some time after Fronie had dismissed the washerwoman, when she raised the windows and opened the door, to give the room a thorough airing. This episode of but a moment's duration was an object lesson, that was not to be cast aside in an instant. If all the negro women were like this one Miss Marbury felt that she could have no sympathy for the race; but Fronie was different, as was the cook; and all the servants she had seen so far were clean in person and clothing. She could not deny, even to herself, that the presence of the washerwoman had filled the air with a peculiar pungent odor. She had heard of this peculiar attribute of the race, but had always disbelieved of its existence. She had felt that the charge of this nature was but another evidence of racial prejudice. As small as the incident was in the great problem she had determined to solve, it never-

theless was a tangible fact, and must be met. Had she known that there were various other facts, even far more offensive than this, she might have dismissed further consideration of the negro problem; but she did not know.

By the time that Andy arrived for the afternoon drive Miss Marbury to some extent had quieted the revulsion produced by the appearance of the washerwoman, and once again the spirit of the reformer was uppermost. Nevertheless she refrained from any comment on the latest phases of her "mission," but decided to study deeper before committing herself further. Andy was gay, and as they rode along indulged in pleasantries, now sarcastic, now sympathetic, upon everything they discussed. He was so entertaining that she was led away from the somber views of the reformer into the paths of peace, which led by the homes of happiness.

Andy pulled his horse into a roadway that crossed Peachtree, and started out toward Chattahoochee River. They hadn't gone very far when they came upon a squad of convicts working on the highway. They were in charge of a guard armed with a gun, and by the roadside were several bloodhounds chained to a tree. These prisoners, clother in the black and white of the convict, were all negroes, and were shackled with ball and chain.

"What are the dogs here for?"

"Oh, the dogs? Why, they are kept with every squad of convicts, so that in the event of one making his escape these dogs are instantly put upon his track, and he's overtaken." Miss Marbury shud-

dered and, looking at these yelping hounds, recoiled. Andy thought she was afraid of the dogs, and at once exclaimed: "The dogs are not vicious; they are trained to chase a convict, but they never approach near one, as they'd be killed. They bay at a distance, which locates the pursued, and the pursuer comes up and captures him."

Miss Marbury looked over at these dogs for a moment, then cast her eye at Andy, and asked in a tone of sarcasm:

"The dogs are the relics, I suppose, of slavery days?"

Andy smiled at her remark, as well as her tone, attributing both to her misinformation of those times, and replied drolly:

"Yes, I suppose it is the same breed of dogs had in those days, but I never saw any or heard of any in the community in which I was reared. My father never kept dogs; and never had any slaves to run away. I don't suppose there was one bloodhound to ten thousand slaves. But if they had kept them it was nothing but reasonable; a man did not want his slaves to run away, for they were worth anywhere from a thousand to fifteen hundred dollars apiece."

Miss Marbury made no response to this, but turned her eyes upon the negroes, who were digging and shoveling as they sang. There was a leader, who intoned and the others would follow. As Andy drove by one of the convicts smiled at him and bowed. Andy was surprised and, stopping his horse, looked at the negro for some time, when he recognized him

and called to him: "Why, John, what are you doing here?"

The big, thick lips of the negro parted, exhibiting his white teeth, as he replied facetiously:

"I didn't git you to defend me, or else I mought have come clear."

"What were you charged with?" asked Andy.

The negro dropped his head and smiled as he replied humorously:

"Deh ketched a lot of us one Sunday night shootin' craps and fined us fifty dollars or three months. I thought I'd ruther work it out den pay it; so here I is."

The other convicts gave a loud guffaw, and one yelled loudly:

"Dat's whut he says, boss, but dat ain't whut he's here fur."

Andy drove on and soon they heard the song lifted once again; and this time it was a merry, rollicking tune. There was nothing in the scene Miss Marbury witnessed to excite her feelings or arouse her resentment except the sight of men punished in public for their crimes, and to see them wearing ball and shackle, and guarded by armed men and bloodhounds. The punishment seemed severe, and she was aroused no little, and now said with feeling:

"I am not favorably impressed with the manner you treat the negro South. The theory of it is wrong."

Andy looked surprised at her tone, and asked what she meant.

"Why, just this," began she, "everything is so

openly done in humiliation of the negro; you seem to have no consideration whatever for his feelings, much less his rights."

Her tone carried conviction as well as resentment. Andy smiled as he replied:

"No, we have no desire to humiliate the negro. Not at all. We prefer to punish him this way rather than incarcerate him in a walled prison. He prefers it, and it's better for the public to have good roads than to have its convicts manufacture articles that come in competition with free labor. That's all there is in it."

"I am not only referring to this scene," replied she, "but to your whole treatment of the negro; you make him occupy a certain portion of the street cars; you confine him to an elevator marked for colored; you refuse him admission to your churches; and you make him seek a certain designated spot in the balcony of the theatres—everything you do puts him upon notice that he's an inferior, unworthy to walk or sit beside you anywhere."

Andy smiled and asked quietly:

"That's your view, is it?"

"Yes," said she, "it's my view; I have seen it all myself."

"Yes, the facts you state are all true, but it isn't done with any intention to humiliate. It's done for prudence sake, as well as anything else. Racial antipathies are liable to assert themselves at most inopportune times, and serious trouble follow. In fact, it has followed many, many times. Then, too, the whites object to contact with the negro in closed

places, or anywhere else, as to that; and it is best, therefore, that each race occupy the places set apart for it."

"As I see it, you do it because you are prejudiced and have the power," said she with earnestness.

"Yes, we wish it, and have the power to execute our wishes; and to one like you, who does not comprehend the racial conditions existing here, it no doubt seems that we are harsh."

"That is just how it appears to me; in fact, it shocks me."

"These provisions are made, Martha, after long consideration and years of experience. That we are controlled by race prejudice there is no doubt, and it is intensified by the attitude and personal disagreeableness of the majority of negroes. That there are educated, intelligent, well-behaved blacks, who deport themselves all right, is also true. But we cannot make the distinction in the law or in the general rules governing the race."

They continued to discuss race issues for some little while as they returned home, but her views were not to be changed. Both tacitly realized that this difference of opinion upon the negro question was liable to become an insurmountable obstacle to their marriage. He had felt it all along. Should their love split upon this rock, it would be felt a great deal more by him than by her; not that he was more deeply attached, perhaps, but because, while she would be taken up with her reformation idea, he would be brooding over his loss. Yet serious as he realized the situation might become by her strenuous

views, it did not occur to him that she would throw him over in order to become a missionary in the cause of uplifting the negro. This phase of the question was not touched upon as they rode along, but she thought of it. He remained for dinner that evening with the Major, and determining that the negro question should not be broached, he took charge of the conversation, so far as he could, against such a doughty leader as the Major, striving to keep upon lighter lines. When he bade Martha good night they both felt the strain of the afternoon had been relieved by the chat of the evening. He wanted again to ask her to name the day upon which she would become his wife, but, fearing to press her, he concluded to wait yet a few days more.

CHAPTER XIII

Miss Marbury was having quite a struggle between her love for Andy and her conviction that she should do something to aid in elevating the negro. When she would conclude that she should obey the voice of duty, love cried out against it; but she was more of a missionary than a lover. Usually, the battle was concluded by being postponed. She determined not to settle it for some time to come, hoping that it would be possible to carry on the work that she might undertake for the benefit of the negro and at the same time marry Andy. There was a voice, however, that continued to whisper to her that this could not be done. She reached one definite point—everything should be postponed until she could meet and have a conference with the leading negroes of the city; and upon the conclusion then formed should rest her final determination. The next morning she arose early determined to carry this plan into effect. She thought of going directly to Bishop Gately's home and state the object of her visit, but this would necessitate asking Fronie for his address, and she feared she would speak of it to Mrs. Sims or to the cook, who would likely go at once to the Major or to Mrs. Sims. They would think her conduct inconsiderate, to say the least. But to go to them first hand she could not.

She decided to take a walk, and go through some of the streets upon which negroes lived; and, striking

some intelligent one, she would ask for Bishop Gately's house; and on her way drop in, casually, as it were. She took the same street upon which she had met the two negro men who had excited her fears. It was in the morning, and she saw no man and few women, while the children she spoke to could not give her any information. On she strode until she came very near Decatur Street, where there were business shops, a few of which were conducted by negroes. Over the door of one she read in letters that looked more like hieroglyphics than English, "Restrunt. Squar Meal, 15 sense; A perfec' Gorge, 25c." She smiled as she read it, and peeped in; but as much as she wanted to ask the proprietor the address of Bishop Gately, she passed on, for the place was in a basement, and the odor that came from it was too much for her sensitive nostrils. Another step or so forward she observed a little shoe-shop, on the outside of which hung rows of shoes tied together by a string, none of which were mates. They were rights and lefts and varying from number fourteen to a baby's slipper. She glanced in the door and saw an old gray-headed man sitting upon a stool pegging upon a shoe; while around him were sitting several idlers, one in bare feet—his shoes being mended. All over the wall hung these strings of shoes; all old, second hand; and some, indeed, were without soles; few only could be worn. She wondered why he kept them, for certainly nobody would buy them. She did not enter. Like the "Restrunt," it was not inviting. She strode on further and came to another eating place, likewise in a basement, and

over it she saw in tremendous letters, "Fo Fo." She looked at it some time, wondering what it meant. Finally, seeing the number of the street on the door of the store above the basement, she saw the proprietor of the restaurant had intended to make the number forty-four. Seeing that she had begun to attract attention, and from those whose appearance gave her uneasiness, she retraced her steps. Taking another street, she perceived that she had come into the washerwoman district, for clothes were hanging from fences, lines, windows, and doors even. As she walked along some of the garments came very near flapping her face as the wind toyed with them. Not caring for this, she veered to the left into what appeared to be a better quarter; and observing a very good house, of its class, she walked up to the door and rapped. A tall, black woman answered, holding a baby in each arm. Her only response was a look of surprise. Miss Marbury apologized for intruding, then stated she wanted to find the house of Bishop Gately. The woman glanced over her from head to foot in the most critical way; then finally exclaimed harshly:

"I don't know whar he libs. I don't belong to his church; I's a Babtist; an' I ain't got no use fur dem Mefodists." Then turning abruptly, she left Miss Marbury standing in the doorway. Again she strolled along the street looking for some sympathetic face to whom she could appeal. She entered another house, after a time, and rapped upon its door. She patiently waited for a response; receiving none, she gave another loud rap, but it likewise

brought no one. She took a few steps into the house and, looking into the room upon the right, saw a negro man lying in bed asleep. She quickly beat a retreat, determined that she must adopt some other means of accomplishing her object. Starting in the direction of the Major's house, as she supposed, she continued for a block or so, and ran upon three negro women laughing and talking in the street. She caught enough of the conversation to understand they had just returned from the police court, and were triumphant over having sent some one to the stockade. She hesitated to approach them, but finally did ask for direction to the residence of Bishop Gately. They gazed upon her in silence, and so intently that she felt uneasy. A merry guffaw from all of them followed. She was startled by this, and stood looking at them for a moment, when she apologized for interrupting and started on. As she did one called to her: "You might know Bishop Gately don't lib in dese parts; he's a swell nigger, he is. He libs somewhar on Piedmont Avenue; but just whar I don't know." This was followed by another unseemly shout of merriment. She returned her thanks for this information and pursued her course until she realized that she had lost her way, as by this time she should be back in the neighborhood where the whites lived. She changed her direction and walked for several blocks, but all was squalor and dirt, and the odors were becoming more and more offensive. Finally she hailed a negro drayman and asked him directions to Peachtree, to which he very politely directed her. She was a

long way from home, and as she realized it, courageous as she was, she felt a little tremor of fear. These people did not understand her, and should anything occur her predicament would be most embarrassing. Pursuing the direction given, she quickened her steps, exhausted as she was, and proceeded by the squalid cabins that lined her way and finally reached Peachtree. Reaching the Major's, she heard laughing and chatting in the library, and Fronie informed her that she had callers. In a few moments she descended. Mrs. Sims wanted to know where she had been.

"Been for a walk and came very nearly getting lost," replied she. In her interest Mrs. Sims insisted upon knowing which direction she had gone, and as Miss Marbury partly described it, one of the ladies, with a grave smile, said:

"Why, you were about to get into what is known as Darktown, which must be a very horrible place, as the police courts are continually having these people upon trial."

Miss Marbury was embarrassed and manifested it. Mrs. Sims was a little worried, and changed the subject; but continued to wonder why she had strolled in that quarter. Later in the day she told the Major of it in Miss Marbury's presence. He at first laughed uproariously, then became serious as he said:

"Tell us, Martha, what you saw there."

She quietly told of the filthy looking hovels, ragged urchins, and the clothes flapping in her face, making a joke of it, as well as she could; but the mission

upon which she went was not divulged. The Major chuckled and let the matter drop, yet he felt that she was there for a purpose. That afternoon as Miss Marbury saw the Major directing Dick in setting out some plants she strolled out into the yard and, taking a seat upon the rustic bench, concluded to lead directly up to the residence of the prominent blacks, and then ask the Major to take her to call upon one of them. She begun the conversation by asking what was being done to elevate the people of Darktown. The Major smiled as he replied:

"Darktown shares in the general uplifting, as all other sections. The children are furnished schools and the men and women are given labor; but it will be a long time before Darktown becomes an enlightened community. They are almost savages in that section, as you will see by attending police court, where they fight and scratch each other in the presence of the judge and police. That is, the women do; they are the wild ones." Laughing jovially, he continued: "I went down there one morning at the request of Old Harriet, to intercede for her boy. As I entered two women were testifying, and quicker than an eye could bat they flew at each other, and I tell you the truth when I say that before they could be separated by the policemen standing near they virtually stripped each other of clothing."

Miss Marbury smiled faintly at this, but as it was not upon a line that would lead to the information she wanted, she deftly attempted to change the subject, not from the negroes but to the better class, and asked:

"Do you know Bishop Gately?"

The Major looked at her quickly, wondering what she was going to propose, for he saw in her face that there was something unusual about to happen.

"Yes, yes; I know the bishop. Why do you ask?"

"What sort of a man is he?" inquired she interestedly.

"Oh, Gately is an educated man, a mulatto, who, I think, stands fairly well, although Dick doesn't like him—says he's not honest. He's an able man, however. I have read some of his addresses."

"You never come in contact with him, I suppose?" said she, looking at him archly.

"No; that is, not much. I have been in public meetings where he was present, and I have heard him talk, and know who he is, and he knows who I am. That's about all."

Concluding to be direct, she said very patly:

"I want to meet him and talk over this negro problem with him."

As she expected, the Major laughed, and there was ridicule in his tone.

"I shall not be a party to any such meeting, for you are already too much aroused about the negro; and I want you to get rid of such notions. I want you and Andy to marry, and after you have lived here awhile you can understand all these matters; and appreciate the situation as you never can otherwise."

Miss Marbury realized that to insist upon meeting Bishop Gately would likely create some friction between her and the Major and, laughing as well

as she could, although it was a mere nervous chuckle, she replied:

"Ah, all right; if you don't care to introduce me to the Bishop I suppose somebody will—maybe Andy."

The Major gave a jolly whoop at this suggestion.

"Yes, he'll introduce you; maybe Dorothy will also."

"Major," began she very seriously, "I am greatly interested in the uplifting of the negro race. We of New England are very greatly responsible for the negro in this country; for, as I understand it, it was our people who first brought the negro from Africa to this country; and afterwards it was our agitation that brought about his freedom. Therefore it is incumbent upon us to see that he receives every opportunity possible to make of himself what God intended that every race should be."

The Major's response to this was a good-natured chuckle. He had realized all along Miss Marbury's disposition to do something for the negro, and he also knew that she was lacking in sufficient information to do anything in a practical way. Besides this, he understood that any effort she might make would likely not aid the negro, but would incalculably injure herself. He wanted to see her married to Andy, and this accomplished, he felt that there would be no further disposition on her part to undertake to change the present methods of dealing with the negro problem; except in the general line of education, as well as the general aid given the race. He felt that the negro must work out his own salva-

tion, as all other races have done. That imitation of the upper class of whites is his greatest school, as it has been for the lower class of whites themselves. That necessarily their progress would have to be slow, just as that of all other races have been; and that any extraneous assistance would tend to destroy initiative and make the race more dependent. Besides this, he realized the fact that other sections exhibiting a desire to come to the negro's assistance made him feel a certain independence toward the whites of the South, which added friction by begetting a spirit of insolence. None understood better than he that the whites, having owned the negroes as slaves, naturally resented any spirit of this sort; and while this feeling on their part was not consistent with the view that the negro is a full-fledged citizen, and as such entitled to every consideration, nevertheless it was true that the human nature of the whites is subject to the law of nature. He believed, too, that centuries will come and go before the whites will cease to look upon the negro somewhat as his former master did. Perhaps no race that ever were slaves received in centuries full liberty from their former masters.

Glancing at Miss Marbury in a mischievous way, the Major remarked:

"Martha, you feel your old Puritan blood aroused in behalf of the amelioration of the condition of the negro; but, my dear, you do not understand enough of those conditions to be a good judge of what should be done. I want you to understand these things fully before you make up your mind; for otherwise your

conclusions will be wrong, and you are liable to commit some egregious folly."

Miss Marbury tossed her head, as much as to say she couldn't commit a folly; it was not her nature.

The Major laughed at this little motion of her head and the tilt of her chin, and continued:

"Two months residence here will shatter all your preconceived notions of the negro. You will be the most astonished woman the world has ever seen."

"If I should reach the conclusion," quickly responded she, "that your treatment of the negro is fair or just, then I will be an astonished woman. You treat the whole race as servants, and I know that is wrong."

Andy now joined them, having heard Miss Marbury's last word and, taking a seat, smiled at both.

"Andy," said the Major, "Martha would change the feeling of centuries in a few months."

Andy turned his eyes upon her and was about to speak when she said strongly:

"I would have you recognize the negro as a citizen, with all the rights of one. He should not be discriminated against in the street cars, nor elevators, and in public places as he is."

"Would you have him take seats in our churches, alongside of those who built them and own them? Also in our theatres, where we don't want him? Would you do that?" asked the Major in a jovial tone, yet showing his idea of the justice of the whites' position.

"No; I wouldn't insist upon him entering your churches, nor every part of the theatre; but there

are so many other public places in which he is entitled to go, not socially, but in a business way; and he should be permitted to go without being put aside in some special compartment."

The Major looked at Andy and laughed in his good-natured way and replied:

"My dear, just remain an onlooker for a few months in order that you may take in both sides of the situation; and you will come to the same conclusion that we have—that segregation is just. If all negroes were cleanly and deported themselves with gentility there would be no reason to force the separation in the street cars and elevators; but the main body of the negroes are not genteel nor clean; and our people insist in having them occupy seats to themselves. Now don't form your opinion too hastily. We are a kindly people, and are doing our best to be just to the negro in every way. When the negroes become able to have homes with bathtubs and acquire refinement there may come some change in our position; but at present we are settled in our views, and are satisfied that we are right."

"Major, you people will never accord to the negro absolute equality of rights and privileges—never! You have very little sympathy for the race; and do not seek to cultivate it."

Andy smiled as he replied to this:

"We have great sympathy for the individuals of the race, and never a day passes that we do not show it. The race is antagonistic to us politically and in every other way, and it will require years for harmony to be established."

"It never will be, for the South holds the negro as an inferior race to the white," asserted Miss Marbury strenuously.

"Yes," responded the Major laughing, "we do hold the negro inferior to the white race—and it is."

Miss Marbury was now very intensely aroused, and her eyes had the set look of the reformer who feels that he is called to speak for the universe, about to suffer for the lack of an advocate, and she replied with much earnestness:

"I can't agree to that proposition; and there is nothing to show that it is true. The negro has not had the advantages of the Caucasian race, and until it has had a fair chance who shall say it is inferior? Every race began with the same ancestors,—Adam and Eve,—and only conditions have kept them from progressing in the same way."

The Major was amused, and in that manner responded:

"Far be it from me to destroy that beautiful chapter in the Old Testament, the most poetic and the most magnificent of them all; or to take away the faith of anyone in its reality,—I should like to believe it, every word of it,—yet to my mind it expresses not a single fact as the truth; but is merely an allegory. The race of man began not in the garden of Eden, but with the earth seventy-two million years ago."

"But," replied Miss Marbury quickly, "no matter how the human race began, all the races had the same origin. We are alike in shape and characteristics; differing from all other animals."

"But as races we differ in color, habits, instinct, aspirations, and mentality——" began Andy, but was quickly interrupted:

"All these conditions could be accounted for by different climates, associations, opportunities, and the like," said she stoutly.

"Not at all! Not at all!" exclaimed Andy. "Now, for instance, color is a primal distinction which climate does not make. At least, no change has been noticed for some six thousand years. And then Africa, the home of the black man, has a climate in parts much like that of all other countries; therefore, if white skin was due to climate there would be white negroes in certain parts of Africa. But there are none. Then, too, the formation of the negro's face and skull is very different from the Caucasian. The sutures of his cranium close in early life, like those of the monkey, the ape, and the like; while in the Caucasian race they do not close until late in life, thus allowing expansion of the cranium during that time. Then the brain of the Caucasian is some five ounces heavier and eight per cent. larger than that of the negro. Having more brain power, the white man is more intelligent and is capable of higher civilization."

"I have never seen that statement anywhere," replied Miss Marbury sharply.

"No matter," laughingly retorted the Major, "it is in the books; and I will take great pleasure in finding the exact spots and reading it to you. There are several books in my library upon the subject, one of which is written by a professor in a negro

college, who admits the facts as to the cranium, and attempts to make some explanation—which he fails to do. You told me that you were a member of the society in Boston organized for the study of the negro problem; it looks as if you would read all the books upon the negro. I assure you it's an interesting study."

"I have read much upon the subject," asserted she defensively, "but I have never come upon that statement."

"Well, Martha, it is a fact," interrupted Andy, "stated in every book upon the subject that I have read, and the scientists admit it—all of them. If the negro was the intellectual equal of the Caucasian race, why has it so long remained in barbarism when all the other races emerged from that darkness centuries and centuries ago? Emerged by themselves, and without the knowledge of the existence of other races? I tell you the negro race owes all its progress to its association with the Caucasian race, but for whose aid to-day it would sink back into savagery."

"Suppose," began Miss Marbury argumentatively, "that I admit every word you say in regard to the negro race; it still remains that the negro is a human being, that he is capable of rising far above his present condition, and with proper treatment he can do so. Is that not true?"

"Yes," began the Major jocularly, "every word of that's true, and he is rising right along. You see those little negroes passing the street, they are just from school. They are learning to read and write; and we whites are paying for it. We build their

schoolhouses and pay their teachers. We have helped build their churches; we build hospitals for them, and pay to maintain them; pay for the surgeons and nurses. True, it is done partly through the general taxes, but the whites pay practically all the taxes, so it comes out of our individual pockets. You see, we are doing for the negro; we are carrying him right along in the same way we are going ourselves. We don't invite him into our houses, nor to seats at our tables, nor to our pews in the churches, nor to seats in the theatres; but he sees all we do, and all we are, and he is daily imitating us. In time he will show the effect of this training. In fact he is showing it every day." Ceasing suddenly, he asked earnestly: "You certainly don't insist upon anything like social equality between the white and black races, do you?"

"No, no!" quickly asserted she, and with some little feeling. "That is not my idea. In fact, I recent with all my nature anything like miscegenation between the two races. I dislike to see a mulatto; I want the negro to maintain his color of black. If I could have my way all mulattoes would return to their race!"

At this frank expression of sentiment the Major indulged in a quiet chuckle while Andy appeared very solemn. Looking at her, the Major responded:

"My dear, you are a reformer, all right; but like most of your class, you would change, not only human nature, but the course of all human events. I, too, dislike the idea of the negro race separating itself into two classes of mulattoes and blacks. The

negro is a black race, and should remain so; but nearly one-third of the negroes are mulattoes; and they will not consent for a moment to having this status interfered with. They are proud of the strain of white blood, proud of their light complexion, and will not even consider marrying one who is much darker than themselves."

This statement of the Major caused her surprise, and looking at him quickly she asked:

"Do you really mean that?"

"Yes; and, Martha, you will find that out, among other things you are to discover, if you will just wait," said Andy pleadingly.

"You tell me that mulattoes do not marry blacks?"

"Yes," responded Andy, "I tell you that, and it is a fact. Occasionally a mulatto and a black marry, yes; but as a rule they do not. In fact,—and it is unfortunate too,—the negro race is divided into mulattoes and the blacks; the mulattoes holding themselves far superior to the blacks socially; often having separate churches, and in every other way making themselves an exclusive set."

"How may I find out about these facts for myself, as I want to do? I wish to take nothing second hand; I prefer to investigate and see all this for myself. I know that such a state doesn't exist in Boston among negroes."

"No, my dear, it does not, for the good reason you have no blacks in Boston; all your negroes there are mulattoes. At least, all except a few who have come up from the South," answered Andy pleasantly, but pointedly.

"Come to think of it," began she, "I don't recall that I ever did see a real black negro in Boston; I have seen what you call the ginger cake, but not what Uncle Dick would call the Guinea negro. No, I have never seen such."

The Major now arose, saying he would look over his garden, then strolled away, thinking best to leave them alone. He realized that Miss Marbury was deeply convicted of her duty in regard to the negro race, and feared the consequences. Love of Andy was the only thing, thought he, that would deter her from taking up the role of reformer.

After the Major's departure a long silence followed before either Miss Marbury or Andy spoke. They were like two hostile armies lying upon their arms watching for a move of the other. She was ready then to declare her intention had Andy pressed the matter; but he had no idea of doing this.

"Martha," he said rather lightly, "let's not discuss the negro problem; there's nothing to be gained by it. If you will remain here long enough I am satisfied you will entertain a far different view from the one you have at present. So please don't think of it and let's talk of other matters."

"Very well, very well," replied she, "I am very agreeable to that."

But strive as they would to talk upon other subjects, they found their thoughts reverting to the discussion just closed—she wondering how she could ameliorate the condition of the race, he wondering how he could convince her of her error without risking the danger of debating the question.

CHAPTER XIV

The following day was Sunday, and as Miss Marbury considered the fact she smiled with pleasure, for now she could meet the bishop. She could easily find out which was his church, and she would attend it. There was one difficulty, however; Andy had said that he was coming over to escort her to church, and of course he would not attend the negro church; then, she didn't want him present. Just how to manage Andy she had not determined, and smiled as she considered that if forced to be direct she would not hesitate to state her purpose. Just say that she was going to the negro church, invite him, and at the same time give him to understand that his company was not needed.

When Fronie came in the room Miss Marbury inquired for direction to the church which Bishop Gately attended.

"Oh, he goes to Big Becky, which is on the corner of Calhoun and Summit streets. It is the 'ristocratic colored church."

"Aristocratic colored church?" repeated Miss Marbury, smiling.

"Yas 'um; deh's powerful swell," replied Fronie significantly.

"I wish to go there. How do you reach it?" asked Miss Marbury.

Fronie looked astonished and exclaimed:

"You ain't goin' dere?"

"Yes; I rather think I shall."

"Well, 'um, you go down Peachtree till you strike Summit, den go to yo' lef' down six blocks, when you see a great, big, red-brick church; the steeple ain't never been finished, and the steps look like dey gwine ter fall down."

"Do you ever go there?" inquired Miss Marbury.

"Oh, yas, 'um; I been dere many times; but I's 'Piscopalian; and our church is on Butler street."

"Do any white people ever attend Big Becky?" inquired Miss Marbury, smiling at Fronie.

"Oh, yas, 'um, at times I have seen white people dere; and at our church, too. It is usually some big occasion, or the white people are from the North, and go around to see how we do things."

As Miss Marbury walked into the dining-room she found the Major and Mrs. Sims sitting at table waiting for her.

"Well," began Mrs. Sims, "I am sorry to say, Martha, Mr. Percival will not preach to-day at St. Luke's, so we can't go to church."

The Major's eyes sought Miss Marbury's as he smiled slyly:

"Sue," said he, "is a very religious woman; but all of her religion hangs on the cornices of the Episcopal church. I don't think she's been to any other church in twenty years."

"No," replied Mrs. Sims frankly, "the church becomes almost as much of you as your home; and I would feel out of place in any other church. The voice of any other preacher but Mr. Percival's would

seem strange. Then, I don't mind staying at home every now and then on Sunday to rest."

The suggestion of rest tickled the Major, and he exclaimed:

"Rest! I know of no rest it affords you more than you get every day; unless there is a relief from the fatigue of dressing up and wearing one of those big, heavy hats. Yes, I suppose it is rest."

For a time the conversation ran on dressing for church, the Major hooting the idea while the women defended it.

"Church has become to be a dress parade both for men and women; and I firmly believe that if the rules required the members to come in their everyday clothes it would cut off the attendance fifty per cent.," declared he.

"Well, it is a blessed thing," said Mrs. Sims, "that there is something to induce people to go to church, if religion itself is not enough."

"I would go oftener, if you would accompany me to other churches," said the Major. "I like to hear the various ministers, particularly those who are thinkers and do not bore me to death with doctrinal sermons; or preach of the tortures of hell; or harangue me upon some political matter, advising me how I should act in secular affairs, about which they know less than any other set in the community. They are not practical men, not educated for it, and have little or no business qualifications—theorizing strictly. Yet they stand in the pulpit and advise with all the freedom one would expect of Solomon. They tire me, hence I don't go very often. I like a preacher

who's a preacher; and when he takes his text expounds it with all the accumulated learning of the day. There are few of those, for the pulpit doesn't keep apace with the progress of thought. The learned ones are continually in danger of being unfrocked by the dull, ignorant ones, who fear learning more than they do Satan."

Mrs. Sims defended the pulpit, but Miss Marbury did not: she was a Unitarian, and deemed her pastor of the advanced set to whom the Major referred. But she did not escape a jolt from the Major, who turned to her and said jovially:

"Martha, I see no reason for Unitarians. Why not join a Jewish synagogue? You and the Jews believe alike in God; and both reject Christ."

For a time he and Miss Marbury joined in battle over creeds. Finally, he declared:

"I don't believe in any of your creeds, and yet believe in all of them; for all they teach us is the brotherhood of man, which is the *summum bonum* of religion."

Breakfast over, all sought the front porch, and taking seats looked upon the Major's beautiful flowers, which pleased the eye and gave solace to the spirit; and as distinct perfumes gently stole in upon them it awoke memories of days gone by, for nothing in life so vividly recalls the past as that perfume connected with someone or some event. It seems to stimulate memory. Looking around, the Major said, almost in a soliloquy:

“ ‘Tell me not that memory sheds gladness o’er the past,
What is recalled by faded flowers
Save they did not last?’ ”

“I pity that poor fellow; he had suffered in his day,” remarked he, chuckling. For a time the conversation took a literary turn and poets were discussed. The conversation was now interrupted by the appearance of Uncle Dick, who came around the house dressed in his Sunday clothes, which consisted of a long frock coat, light trousers, a light vest, a ruffled shirt and dilapidated silk hat. All smiled at his appearance, as he bowed profoundly and lifted that old hat. He came to ask Mrs. Sims whether the carriage or the victoria should be brought out. This brought up the church question, and the Major proposed that they all go to the Baptist church to hear a very eloquent divine; but Mrs. Sims did not want to go, and Miss Marbury, determined to attend Big Becky, expressed no wish to go.

“Very well, very well, I won’t go by myself, Dick; so we will not need either.”

Dick bowed gracefully and retraced his steps around the house.

“Andy is to go to church with you to-day, I believe, Martha?” asked Mrs. Sims.

“Yes; he said he would come over,” responded she, wondering how he would take her selection of churches.

“What will Dorothy do,—there being no church at St. Luke’s,—these beautiful clothes must be shown? Like Sue, I don’t think she ever goes anywhere except St. Luke’s; but the Sunday being beau-

tiful, and her clothes being new, she'll have to go somewhere," jocularly declared the Major.

"Oh, she wore those new gowns last Sunday, so she can afford to rest to-day herself," laughingly replied Mrs. Sims.

Miss Marbury desired to change the subject, because she feared some suggestion might be made which would require her to announce her intention, which had suddenly changed; she had decided to retire shortly to her room, and wait until the Major and Mrs. Sims had left the porch, when she would come down and take a car. The opportunity soon came, and going to her room, she waited a time, then coming down, stepped upon the porch and, seeing that everything was propitious, she quickly walked from the yard. She reached the car without trouble, but the conductor misunderstood her, and put her off at the wrong street, and she strolled about for some time before she was properly directed. Reaching the vicinity of the church finally, she heard an old hymn being melodiously sung, not by a choir, but by the entire congregation; and, turning a corner, she faced the big, red-brick church with the incompletd belfry and the ragged steps. This was Big Becky, the aristocratic colored church, and into it she boldly walked.

CHAPTER XV

Miss Marbury had been gone for some time before Andy appeared, but as he was quite late he was not surprised. In fact, hearing that Mr. Percival was not to preach, he concluded she wouldn't care to attend church. Then, too, he had been notified that a case in court he had in Savannah had been advanced for trial, and he had gone to his office to prepare to leave for that city immediately after lunch. Dorothy, who had consented to go over to explain why he would be late, had taken her own time about it, and had not even yet arrived. The Major was sitting in the swing when Andy entered the yard, and at once arose and, going to the door, called for Fronie to tell Dick Andy had come. This message Dick would understand. Screened from public view behind a huge banana plant the Major and Andy sat leisurely sipping the juleps which Dick quickly brought. The Major raised his glass and gave a toast—

"Here's to old John, John Barleycorn,
Who every day will sing you a song,
Provided your visit is not too long."

As he closed Dorothy appeared, beautifully gowned.

"I thought," exclaimed Andy, "you were coming to tell Martha why I was late!"

"That's what I am here for now," quietly replied she, with that air of indifference which the Major liked and that now produced a smile upon his broad face.

"You were in no hurry, I see," responded Andy, who knew his sister did as she pleased with him, as well as everyone else.

"I knew that Mrs. Sims and the Major knew there would be no service at St. Luke's, so Miss Marbury would understand without information from me; and then, too," continued she sportively, "I didn't suppose that she'd worry any great deal over your non-appearance."

"Sit down, Dorothy, sit down. You have not been in in several days. Have you been sick?" said the Major, looking at her quizzically. Dorothy dropped into a seat near the Major and, smiling significantly, made no response. Mrs. Sims, coming out and greeting Dorothy affectionately, turned to Andy and asked where Miss Marbury went.

"I don't know. In fact, I didn't know she had gone until Fronie told me she had," replied he anxiously.

"Perhaps she took a walk," suggested Mrs. Sims, showing her perplexity over Miss Marbury's sudden departure. It was not long, however, before Miss Marbury was seen to alight from a car in front of the house. Conversation ceased, as all wondered where she had been. She and Dorothy presented a strained manner, yet greeted each other pleasantly. As Miss Marbury removed her hat the Major exclaimed rapturously:

"Ah, what a dream! What a dream of a hat! Andy, I wish it was fashionable for men to wear dreams like that; we could get ourselves up in right attractive form, if we could wear such beautiful plumes. I always did like plumes, and when General Jeb Stuart would dash around so, leading his gallant cavalry, plumed like the knights of old, I felt my heart swell, and I would have given anything in the world to have been with him. Ah, what a dashing fellow he was! and how beautifully he sang! Perhaps the world never presented a greater cavalryman than he."

"Andy!" said Mrs. Sims, ignoring the hat question, "you are a nice beau; make an engagement for church, and get here at half-past twelve o'clock." Casting his eye at Miss Marbury, Andy replied quickly:

"Dorothy was to explain why I couldn't come early."

"She takes her time about matters," remarked the Major, looking at Dorothy pleasantly, and then continued banteringly: "I suppose one of your Sunday beaus dropped in to see you." Dorothy made no response further than to toss her head and smile.

"There was to be no church," Andy explained, "which I knew Mrs. Sims would hear, and I didn't suppose Martha would care to attend any other church; then, too, I have got to go to Savannah to try a case, and had to go to my office."

"Oh, your case is coming up then!" exclaimed the Major, with interest, as he knew the importance of this suit, both to Andy and his client.

"Yes; I leave on the one-thirty train. Did you pack up everything for me, Dorothy?"

"Yes; I think you will find everything all right."

"That julep, Andy, was a little mild," interposed Major, "and I think, being as it's Sunday, I will take another small one. What do you say? Martha, won't you take one? I am sure Dorothy will take what she calls a pony."

Miss Marbury looked surprised at the invitation or over the fact that Dorothy was going to take one. Dorothy perceived this expression, and smiled. Miss Marbury caught the meaning, but was not deterred from declining, and shaking her head and said without any apparent significance:

"Thank you, no; I never drink. Drinking is a very pernicious habit."

"You have never had it?" exclaimed the Major, laughing.

"No; oh, no! and don't want it; and don't want my friends to acquire it."

"What are your bad habits?" asked the Major, facetiously.

"None! Martha's perfect. She has no habits at all!" exclaimed Andy banteringly, as he smiled at her.

"I have no habits of working on the Sabbath, certainly," responded Miss Marbury, with mock loftiness.

"Andy has no habits of working on Sunday either, nor on Friday, nor Saturday, as to that; Monday's his work day. You will take another julep, Andy,—

a small one, eh?" laughingly retorted the Major, rising to call for one more julep.

"Not two, surely, Andy?" exclaimed Miss Marbury reproachfully. Andy laughed, and, looking at Major, winked and said:

"I can get along with one, I believe, to-day."

The Major's brows raised in astonishment and, looking at Miss Marbury, remarked rather testily:

"Hem! No one regulates my conduct; no one ever did either, before or after marriage."

At this all looked at Mrs. Sims, who smiled as she replied:

"No; I never tried to regulate his habits. When a man has habits you had better accept the fact, or you may make him sneak away from you to drink or smoke somewhere else. My mother told me that a short while before I married, and warned me against trying to change my husband's habits. The thing to do, is to join him, if you can, and if he dislikes you to engage in these festivities of his you've got a lever on him that you couldn't otherwise have."

This was said agreeably, but at the same time significantly.

"Then," began Dorothy, "it behooves a woman to look well into the habits of the man she's going to marry, to see if she'll enjoy them, eh?"

Miss Marbury smiled and looked at Dorothy, who was an enigma to her.

"And you won't take another, Andy?" asked the Major in a tone of insistence.

"No; mine was strong enough, and out of deference to Martha's Sunday sentiments I will refrain

for fear she might adopt Mrs. Sims' suggestion and take one," replied he drolly.

"Then you are opposed to women drinking?" exclaimed Miss Marbury, glancing at him to see what his real sentiments were.

"I have no objection," began he, laughing, "to a woman drinking medicinally; but utterly opposed to her drinking as a beverage."

The Major laughed over this persiflage, and had not Miss Marbury caught Andy's meaning, this chuckle of the Major's would have enlightened her. The Major, taking Andy's glass, which was now empty, said:

"Martha, I think you had better let me make you a small one—you told me the other day you had never had a julep. This is our Southern drink, and perfectly harmless, I assure you, if not indulged in too freely; and it being Sunday, a day of rest, there is no reason why you should not take a little stimulant. It will make you enjoy your dinner, and we are going to have a good one, at which we will talk, and there is nothing so aids conversation as a good julep,—and a little old madiera at the close."

"You may make me a pony," interposed Dorothy, and Mrs. Sims nodded her assent as the Major looked at her.

"A small one, Martha, just a small one; just to say you have tasted one made by one of the greatest experts the world has ever produced; for I tell you old Dick can't be excelled. He's had forty odd years' experience and knows how to do it."

Miss Marbury, however, shook her head as she responded:

"Thank you very much, but it is an experience I am not looking for; and having never touched whisky in my life, not even medicinally, I don't care to begin."

At the word medicinally Andy smiled.

"Well," replied the Major, "you may be right, for if you have never had one, it might be a great mistake to try one now. I knew a man once who reached forty years without having ever tried a julep; and overinduced one day he took one, and was so delighted with it that he became a sot and died in the poorhouse. You might not have resistance, and I don't want to be the author of your downfall."

Laughing, he strolled from the porch for the glasses, but as he reached the front door he turned and called to Dorothy and Mrs. Sims to join him, his intention being to give Andy an opportunity to talk to Miss Marbury before he departed for Savannah. At first they did not comprehend and declined to go, but he winked at them, and they arose and followed him. Dorothy did it hesitatingly, for she cared nothing for paving the way for Andy to win Miss Marbury.

As soon as the others had left the porch Andy turned to Miss Marbury and asked her if she went to church.

"You ask that!" exclaimed she, "when you were to come for me, and didn't."

Andy laughed as he replied:

"I have the very best possible excuse—I was making money for you to spend, as I once said before."

"Indeed! As I once replied before," slipped from her lips in a rather sarcastic tone.

"Martha, aren't you ready to set the day when you will become my wife?" asked he seriously, looking at her. She kept her eyes upon the floor and remained silent. Andy repeated his question, and still she gazed. Finally, looking squarely at him, she replied:

"No, Andy: I am not ready."

"Don't you like it down here?" asked he anxiously.

Silence followed this, for Miss Marbury was conning over the situation. Andy perceived there was something more than usual upon her mind, and in a moment continued:

"Martha, have I not come up to your expectations?" Those opalescent, gray eyes dropped upon him, and a smile parted her lips as she responded:

"You've come up to every expectation, Andy."

"Then why not name the day for us to marry?"

"Andy, while I have always thought I would one day marry, yet I have never been anxious about it. I felt that there was so much for me to do that I couldn't take the time, and risk the chance of leaving undone that which I should do."

Andy did not understand what she was talking about and, looking at her very intently, asked:

"What have you to do but to marry and make home happy?"

"I am of a very serious nature, and I believe that woman can do a great deal in this world for its

improvement; and I have been more convinced of that fact since I came here than ever before."

Andy twisted in his chair, and was very serious as he inquired:

"Why, what do you mean?"

Miss Marbury remained silent for a time, then looking at him very earnestly, replied:

"Andy, I am not satisfied with the progress the negro is making, and I think that I could materially assist him, and that it is my duty to do so."

For a moment he was angered and his dark eyes flashed.

"Martha," began he, "you have not been here long enough to see everything clearly, and certainly you don't intend to decline to marry me to become a missionary here? Why, what could you do to uplift ten million negroes?"

"I feel that I could do a lot; that I could institute a beginning which would finally prove a great blessing to the entire race. In fact, to both races."

Andy felt like ridiculing her idea, but realized it would be a mistake. She was too earnest.

"Does love signify so little to you, Martha?" finally asked he with a depth of tone that manifested great feeling. She didn't answer this question for some time, but sat meditating. Over and over her face his eyes traveled, while his heart was beating rapidly. It was his first case of genuine love, and at the thought of losing his heart's desire he was deeply stirred. Since knowing Martha he was a changed man. His business now meant a great deal more to him, and his determination to make a success

of life had been sharpened. His ambition had become fixed, while the pleasure-loving or indolent manner had changed to alertness.

Martha loved Andy, but her visit to Big Becky that morning had had its effect. She was now more aroused over the condition of the negro than ever. She felt that she must do something to aid the race. It was as though the spirits of the dead were rising to act through her. It is religion with the Japanese to worship their dead, which means that they recognize what all of us have often realized—that there is a superhuman force impelling us to action. We think of it in a vague sort of way, and talk of it glowingly, but few ever consider it as a vital force as do the Japanese. Could mankind realize that the spirits of their ancestors live to speak through them, it would likely change the course of human destiny. It would be more personal than God, and therefore more direct. To know that our fathers and mothers, and all our line of ancestors were watching our conduct would deter the boldest from doing wrong, as well as urge all to noble endeavor.

Martha sat in silence in the presence of the man she loved and the man who loved her, but some force was exerting its influence without her knowledge. Convinced that it was her duty to aid the negro race, she felt that she should stifle love even, to take up the black man's burden. Just how she should do this she had not as yet determined, but various plans were being considered by her.

Finally she looked at Andy directly, and said reflectively:

"Love, of course, Andy, is the greatest force in the world; and naturally appeals to me as it does you, and everyone else; but I must admit that the voice of duty is calling me so loudly that I feel that I must yield."

"Duty! duty!" shouted Andy, in a tone of anger; "your duty is to marry me, for you have said that you love me."

"Come, Andy, don't let yourself become excited. I haven't said I won't marry you; I have simply said that I feel that I must do something to ameliorate the wretched condition of the negro. Don't ask me to marry you now; let's postpone the question for a time."

"How long do you think it will take you to try your uplift?" demanded he in a tone slightly sarcastic.

"That I do not know; but after I have things under way, then in all likelihood there will be no reason why we shouldn't marry."

Andy arose and paced the floor in his agitation, and finally, stopping in front of her, asked sternly:

"What do you propose to do to elevate the negro?"

"That I have not determined upon," replied she; and in her tone was the decision of those hardy ancestors who, two hundred years before, had braved death to be free. Andy did not realize the strength of the force speaking, yet he knew the woman who sat before him, and the determination that marked her brow. He also knew human nature, knew it well; understood when to insist and when not.

"Have you talked with the Major about this?" inquired he solemnly.

"No; I have talked with no one."

"Martha, you know so little about the conditions here that you will make a fatal mistake. Let me implore you not to do anything until you have at least remained here three months. Will you promise me that?"

"No, Andy, I will not; the time is ripe for action; and to-day when I went into a negro church——"

She got no further in her expression, for Andy was so startled at the statement that she felt it without seeing his face and involuntarily stopped.

"A negro church!" shouted he. "What were you doing there?" It was not the fact of her going to a negro church that so aroused him, for ordinarily he would have thought it very natural for one from the North to wish to attend one; but for her actually to have done so gave him a shock. It manifested her determination more strongly than she had even expressed it.

"I went to meet the leading men of the negro race, whom I wished to talk to. I knew of no other way of meeting them, and I was determined to do so," responded she, with quiet dignity.

"And you met them!" exclaimed he, as his lips compressed and his eyes flashed.

"Yes, I met them, and will meet them again!" replied she, with spirit.

"Did you meet any of the women?" asked he sarcastically.

"Yes; I met quite a number of women also," said she, without the slightest trepidation of manner.

"Who?" asked he in a tone of ridicule.

"Oh, I met the wives of the trustees and others," replied she, undisturbed.

"Martha, you know so little about the negro situation here that you are positively funny."

She didn't care for this speech, nor his manner; and her face flushed, but checking herself she replied in a sarcastic tone:

"But you think I'll learn, don't you?"

"Oh, yes! oh, yes! you'll learn; but in the learning, Martha, you are going to subject yourself to a humiliation that will mortify you beyond expression. You will be run over before you know it."

"I have no fear of that," replied she calmly, self-reliantly.

"The negro women will treat you as one of them; and the negro men, at least some of them, may misunderstand you. Martha, you know nothing of the negro character. You are doing a dangerous thing. Let me implore you to drop this matter right where it is."

Before she could speak he read his answer in her face; she was not going to drop it.

"Andy," began she, "you need have no fear of the negro women mistreating me, nor the negro men. Not at all."

He smiled as he realized what he thought would be the result of her first meeting with some of the negro women. Their boorish conduct or their assumption would disgust her and put an end to her

plans. Looking at his watch he rose quickly and said:

"Martha, I must go, as I have just time to get my valise and catch the train. I will be back Thursday or Friday. Of course you will do nothing until I return."

He took her hand, and as he looked at her he smiled. She realized this smile was produced by his notion that she was very ignorant of what she was undertaking, and resented it. As he turned to leave, the Major, Mrs. Sims and Dorothy came upon the porch and Andy waved them good-by.

CHAPTER XVI

After Andy's departure the conversation turned again to the subject of church and church attendance. As none present had attended service, the Major turned to Martha and asked where she had spent the morning.

Looking at him, then glancing at Dorothy, she replied:

"I went to church."

"Where did you go?" asked Mrs. Sims, in surprise.

"I went to what is called, I believe, Big Becky," replied she, as though that were a very natural thing to do.

"What!" exclaimed Dorothy in astonishment. The Major and Mrs. Sims laughed, as they gazed on her in merriment.

Miss Marbury flushed a trifle, as she replied:

"Yes, I went to a negro church, and was very much interested."

"Big Becky!" cried Dorothy in ridicule.

"The aristocratic negro church," said the Major, laughing.

"My!" exclaimed Dorothy as she raised her hands in protestation.

"You talk as if I had done something remarkable," said Miss Marbury, in a tone showing a little resentment.

"I should say so!" remarked Dorothy tartly.

The Major chuckled gently, as he looked from Dorothy to Martha and said:

"Come, Martha, tell us about it. How did it impress you?"

"Yes, do tell us!" exclaimed Mrs. Sims.

"By all means let's hear it," insisted Dorothy in a tone of sarcasm.

Miss Marbury was considerably nettled by the manner of all of them, and replied with spirit:

"I see nothing in going to a negro church to arouse disgust. I certainly saw nothing to create any such feeling; on the contrary, I was greatly pleased with the sermon and with everything I saw."

"Did you meet any of them afterward?" asked Mrs. Sims.

"Oh, yes; I met Bishop Gately, the board of trustees and their wives." Dorothy gave a slight whoop and followed it with a laugh; even Mrs. Sims smiled, while the Major chuckled.

"Trustees and their wives," repeated he, as though it were very funny.

"That must have been exceedingly pleasant," interposed Dorothy ironically.

"It was not unpleasant, I assure you," responded Miss Marbury rather defiantly.

"Very agreeable, were they?" asked Mrs. Sims in a tone to placate matters. Miss Marbury's answer, however, served to undo what Mrs. Sims was trying to smooth over, for she said very firmly:

"I found them very charming."

At this even Mrs. Sims could not control her amusement, while the Major and Dorothy laughed

boldly. Miss Marbury looked from one to the other inquiringly.

"What did you talk about?" asked Mrs. Sims, but in a tone of gentle confidence.

Miss Marbury realized that Mrs. Sims was interposing in her behalf; and she also realized that the Major was determined to have his fun;—while Dorothy, she well knew, would seize her chance for ridicule. Therefore she answered with reserve:

"Oh, we talked of many things."

"Climate and the weather?" asked Dorothy facetiously.

Miss Marbury resented this exceedingly; and replied now with much severity of manner: "No, indeed."

With his eyes full of merriment, the Major looked at her and asked drolly:

"What was the theme, Martha?"

"Why, you astonish me! Have I done such an unheard-of thing?" replied Miss Marbury in a tone indicating that she was incensed. While this manner had its effect upon the Major and Mrs. Sims, causing them to cease further nagging, it did not have that effect upon Dorothy, who now asked with a supercilious smile:

"Did you invite the women to come to see you?"

Mrs. Sims attempted to interfere before Miss Marbury could reply, but she was too slow, and Miss Marbury answered unhesitatingly:

"I did; yes."

While the Major felt it imperative to close this scene before Dorothy could press it too far, he was

unable to resist laughing at Miss Marbury's reply; and Mrs. Sims smiled, although she was becoming nervous. Dorothy had the air of one who was greatly diverted and now in a tone of innocence asked:

"Did you tell them you would receive them in the kitchen?" Again the Major and Mrs. Sims would have liked to have interfered, but they were too late, for Miss Marbury exclaimed indignantly:

"In the kitchen!"

"Yes, in the kitchen, Miss Marbury; for that is the only place in which we receive negroes in the South."

Miss Marbury was angry and her eyes were flashing as she looked at Dorothy. Thinking to relieve the serious aspect of the situation, and supposing the negro women, of course, told her they could not come, the Major asked:

"Did they say they'd come?"

Miss Marbury's eyes turned to Major and for a moment she hardly understood his meaning, for he was smiling.

"Yes," said she, "they said they'd come; but when I told them I was stopping with you they seemed embarrassed." Dorothy laughed merrily, while neither the Major nor Mrs. Sims could suppress a smile over Miss Marbury's ingenuousness. She glanced at the face of each and saw their amusement. Mrs. Sims, hoping to change the subject, remarked as she arose and approached Miss Marbury affectionately:

"Of course, Martha, you didn't expect them to call."

Dorothy arched her brows, and in amusement waited Miss Marbury's reply; while Miss Marbury, fully perceiving that all were astonished at her conduct, boldly answered:

"I would not have invited them had I not wanted them to come."

The Major and Mrs. Sims were taken back by this response, and both were embarrassed. Dorothy arose from her chair shrugging her shoulders, and elevating her nose a trifle moved off smiling.

"Come, Dorothy," said Mrs. Sims, "you are going to stay for dinner?"

Dorothy turned with her body erect and said very curtly:

"Thank you, not to-day. Good-morning!" Striding away, she seemed to grow a foot taller with each step. The Major and Mrs. Sims were much embarrassed, and for a moment there was silence, which the Major finally broke with one of his jovial laughs, then asked:

"Martha, why didn't you ask me to go to Big Becky with you?"

"Simply because, Major, I preferred to go by myself," replied she, with determination. Mrs. Sims laughed pleasantly and said: "Oh, Martha, dear, you are such a strong nature," and explaining she would see about dinner went in.

"Martha," began Major, laughing, "do you frequent negro churches in Boston?"

"No, I never did; but it's different there," replied she. The Major smiled and shook his head.

"No, it is the same as here; but one looks at it differently in different places."

"I can't understand," began Miss Marbury earnestly, "the contempt in which you hold the negro race."

"My dear," said he, "when you understand that we look upon the negro race as servants, our treatment of them will be perfectly understandable."

"But all are not servants," responded Miss Marbury firmly, "for among them are many intelligent men and women, who are independent. Why treat them as servants?"

"We do not treat them as servants actually, but to us the race is a race of servants; has been for centuries, and for centuries to come we will be unable to look upon it in any other light."

Miss Marbury was now very much aroused, and concluded that there was no better opportunity than the present to express her views and let her intention be known; and very firmly now explained:

"I think your treatment of the negro is harsh, not calculated to aid him or to bring about that sympathy and harmony that should exist between the two races, and——"

"Martha," interrupted the Major, "we can no more overcome our prejudices than we can convert ourselves from human beings into an angelic state; and that we have a racial prejudice against the negro, as well as that prejudice engendered by centuries of ownership over him, there can be no

sort of doubt; and to expect us to change in a few years is to look for an impossibility. Race prejudice is perhaps the oldest sentiment in the human breast. As far back in history as you can go you find it. We here can't tolerate anything that looks toward social equality with the negro; and when you people North treat him as such, take him to your homes to dinner, we resent it, because it is undoing our work here. It holds out to the negro that when he succeeds in life he is entitled to receive social recognition at the hands of the whites. He thinks that if that is true North it ought to be South. It therefore tends to arouse antagonism which certainly can bring no good to the colored man."

Miss Marbury shook her head as she replied resolutely:

"You should overcome your prejudices."

"Martha," replied he, smiling, "the North and the South look upon the negro in different lights, and we will never get together upon the subject in centuries, perhaps never at all. The complacency of your people offends us; and does so for the reason that we understand that social recognition means, finally, miscegenation of the two races. That we can't stand for. It would mean our total destruction. This section would become a mongrel people, outcasts in their own country, and despised throughout Christendom."

Miss Marbury had heard this argument before, and attached no more importance to it now than

when she had first heard it. She had no fear of it whatever; and now replied boldly enough:

"Major, we think you Southerners are over-sensitive and exaggerate your fears. The negro does not seek social equality with the white race nor intermarriage with it. The race seeks justice, fairness of treatment, and equal opportunity to rise and enjoy all the amenities of life."

The Major was most effective with his smile and his chuckle; and when he wanted to drive a point home he never did it by a show of emotion or with muscular eloquence,—pounding the table or striking out into the air with a closed fist,—but it was always with that imperturbable manner, winning smile, and gentle laugh. And now as he smiled upon Miss Marbury he said pleasantly, yet effectively:

"My dear, people from the North have come here before thinking they understood the negro problem, and have made all sorts of assertions concerning the negro race, and our treatment of it; but I am yet to see the one who has remained here for six months—unless such one were drawing a salary for the purpose of reforming us and uplifting the negro,—that such party did not utterly change his or her views concerning the whole matter. In fact, they become bitter toward the poor negro; and in cases where they live here they dismiss them as servants and send North for white ones. They haven't any sympathy for the shortcomings of the negro, and as individuals they cannot tolerate them. Now, Martha, I ask that you remain here, certainly for three months, studying the situation, before you

form any conclusion of what you want to do toward elevating the negro."

Miss Marbury listened very quietly, surveying the Major most critically. She had a great admiration for him, as her father had before her, but she doubted his logic. That a possibility of error might exist in her conclusion could not for a moment be considered. Educated, well-bred, and genteel, she bowed to conventionalities, except upon occasions like the present. Now she could not, for every fiber in her was aroused over what she considered a national injustice to a weak and oppressed race. Gently, but firmly, she replied to what the Major had said:

"Every rule has an exception, Major, and to all those who have come from the North I'll probably prove the exception. You must understand that this is not a new question with me, as I have said before; I have given it great study, and the society to which I have referred has also investigated it for years. I might say the best thought of New England has considered this problem, and all are convinced that the settlement of the question lies in the elevation of the negro—his social, mental, and mortal elevation. When he reaches the state we desire him to occupy, he will be satisfied with his race, and if he has any desire now for intermarriage with the white race he will drop that as something utterly undesired. It is our opinion that he will be much like the Jewish race, that does not seek intermarriage with the other white races, because the Jew

is satisfied with his own; is proud of it, and wants to perpetuate it."

Again the Major's mellow voice was heard in a gentle chuckle, and his large blue eyes kindly and merrily twinkled as he looked upon this spirited woman in front of him.

"Have you discussed your determination with Andy?" asked he, with much interest.

"No, I have not, except in a very limited way; I knew he would object, and perhaps create a scene; so I preferred to take my final step without his knowledge."

"Final step," echoed the Major, looking at her with astonishment. "What do you mean by that?"

"I mean to institute certain plans—the detail of which I have not yet determined upon—for the purpose of ameliorating the condition of the negro. I shall begin first with his social condition, which I think is the prime thing to be elevated. I shall attempt to divide them in classes, which they do not seem to have, and seek to inspire a desire to rise socially upon moral steps."

Again the smile of the Major's overspread his face and his eyes twinkled.

"Martha," began he, "negroes have their classes just as the whites have; classes that have been forming since they were set free, forming upon natural lines. You cannot interfere with those."

Her head tossed a little, and that firm, well-marked chin protruded considerably toward the front, as she replied in the full confidence of her power to do as she wished.

"Whatever distinctions they have are wrong; and they should be started right; and I think I can do this for them. My understanding is that they do not attach much importance to the previous conduct of one of their kind. Convictions before the courts for immorality and crimes do not seem to interfere in the least with the position one occupies. Now that is all wrong, and I intend to change it."

The Major sat smiling and looking down upon the floor as he listened. He was really amused, as he thought of this woman attempting to regulate the habits and manners as well as the views of a race of negroes numbering into the millions. The old and trite comparison of the fly upon the bull's horn entered his mind, but he did not say so. His manner was that of sympathy and of deference. Looking at her, he said in his jovial manner:

"Martha, you may be right in wanting negroes to form class distinctions upon the lines the whites have; but, my dear, it is my notion that you had as well attempt to draw a line in the ocean and say to the waters south, 'Remain below the line'; and to the waters north, 'Remain above the line.'

She smiled at his comparison, but not one whit did it change her opinion nor the confidence she had in her ability to do what she contemplated.

After a moment's silence the Major continued:

"I think it is due Andy, to whom you are engaged, that you talk this whole matter over with him; and certainly to some extent be controlled by his wishes. Your happiness and his are at stake,

and it is my opinion that you haven't the right to recklessly cast it aside."

"Our engagement is tentative; and I now feel that it is second to my duty to God and man in carrying out my views respecting the elevation of the negro race."

"What is to be your first step?" asked the Major.

"That will be determined to-morrow," after a conference."

As she closed this speech the Major heard the tread of feet to his right and, turning, saw a flashily dressed mulatto woman coming directly toward him from the street. He arched his brows and looked at her in some wonderment. He had seldom seen one so bedecked in colors and ribbons, and as she bounded along in a manner that seemed to defy creation, that jovial smile crept upon his face. Now was heard the voice of old Dick, who could not be seen.

"Whar you gwine dar, Mandy?" Without response to Dick, this woman, arrayed more gaudily than a tulip, gave a sudden switch to her body, and lifting her chin into the air and tilting her wide flat nose as much as it was possible, swept on by Dick in haughty disdain. Again Dick was heard:

"Don't you hear me, nigger? I axed whar you gwine?"

"You wait and you'll see whar I'm gwine," responded this mulatto woman, as she heavily pressed the earth as she tread upon it. The Major arose, and stepping forward asked: "What is it?" There was command in his voice, although it was gentle.

The mulatto woman stopped suddenly, and replied in a tone somewhat of defiance:

"I's come to see Miss Marbury; she axed me."

Miss Marbury recognized her as one of the women she had met at Big Becky church that morning, and instantly arose and advanced. The Major hearing her approach turned and looked at her with a questioning smile upon his lips. A little embarrassed, Miss Marbury stammered, for she herself was not prepared for the exhibition that confronted her.

"Oh, yes," said she, "I'm——"

As she hesitated, the Major interposed quickly, and looking at the mulatto woman said:

"You are a little early, aren't you? We have not dined yet; then Sunday is hardly the day to call upon business matters. Miss Marbury was thinking of discussing ways and means of elevating your race, but she will inform you of the time and place."

Mrs. Mandy Ware, for this was the name of the mulatto woman, was not abashed in the least by the Major's words or his manner, and boldly replied:

"Well, I bin to dinner myself, and I des thought I'd run up to see her, as she axed me to."

Miss Marbury felt impelled to say something in defense of Mrs. Ware, but not wanting to give any offense to the Major, she replied with diplomacy:

"It was very good of you to call, and I will see you soon."

"All right, all right, mum. I libs at 340 Butler Street."

"Dick, no doubt, knows where you live," remarked the Major.

"Dick! Huc! I reckon he do; but he ain't never been dar." With this she flirted around and cast a contemptuous glance at Dick, who stood by smiling. Looking again at Miss Marbury, Mrs. Ware curtsied profoundly and said: "Good-bye to yo' all," and straightening up turned and stalked off toward the street. The Major cast his eye at Miss Marbury slyly, and smiled. She was embarrassed, and her face was flushed, for she, no less than the Major, disliked the coarseness and vulgarity exhibited in the woman's clothes and manner.

"Well, Martha, that's one of the charming women you met to-day, eh?" Miss Marbury smiled as her eyes met the Major's and her heart quivered as she responded:

"Yes, and I'll admit she seems very forward."

"Forward," repeated the Major, laughing. There was silence for a few moments as each reflected. He realized keenly the mistake from his standpoint she was making, and regretted it almost as much as if she had been his daughter. He knew she did not understand the negro problem any more than if she had just come from Russia, where there is a race problem of a different kind. He also knew how his friends would look upon her conduct, and how quickly it would be resented. He realized this would make no difference whatever to her, which increased the danger of the situation. Her course would not only estrange her and Andy, which he deemed a calamity, but it would humiliate her to

such a degree that she would be compelled to return North; and in after life would look upon her experience as a horrible nightmare. Miss Marbury on the other hand, knowing the view the Major held, as did all the whites, and of the severe opposition she was to meet, as well as the loss of Andy's love, remained as unalterably fixed in her opinion. The superbness of one who, with high purpose, although it may be wrong, stands against the hoots, hisses, and smiles of contempt from all those gathered around is something to make mankind proud of itself. Such natures are mile-posts along the highway of life, and their graves become as sacred as relics of the saints.

CHAPTER XVII

The continuance of the discussion between the Major and Miss Marbury was now interrupted with by the announcement of dinner, and during the meal the matter was not referred to; but afterward both, as by design, sought the porch and once again the debate was taken up. The Major desired to use all his influence to prevent Miss Marbury from doing something rash, while she wanted to learn just exactly the position he was going to occupy, so her line would be clear for action the next morning. As they took seats he began:

"Martha, you said that you had asked some of the negro men and women you met at church to-day to call upon you; and one of them has already done so."

Before he could proceed further she smiled significantly as she interrupted:

"And you very politely showed her the door; and I suppose I am to understand that you do not expect me to receive them here to discuss those matters that I wish to with them?"

The amused smile that rose upon his face was a conclusive answer without words. It was like the mother who is about to refuse a child's foolish request.

"My dear," began she, "such a thing is unheard of; and the fact that you considered for a moment

that I would allow it shows how little you know of the real state of things here."

Miss Marbury was nettled at the Major's satirical smile, and it was with a tone of quiet resentment that she replied:

"You will not allow negroes to enter your house, except as servants? Can that be true?"

"My dear," responded he kindly, "to you that may seem very, very harsh, but it is never the less a fact. It makes no matter upon what ground we so act, we all feel the same way, and the line is drawn not to be changed. We feel very deeply upon this question, because we know what it means. To let the negro accumulate property, acquire intelligence, and receive social equality, means finally that the stronger and bolder of that race will capture the weaker of the white race. Intermarriage begins, and with that comes the destruction of the South. My dear, we feel so intently upon this subject of keeping our race pure that there is not a white man in all the South who wouldn't die in his tracks before he would yield. You may think this is injustice to the negro; we think it is justice to our race; an insight into what hundreds of years will bring forth. Feeling as we do, our position is unalterable, and our resentment of the conduct of those white people who ought to sympathize with our view and stand with us, is so keen that we lose sight of their motives in opposing us, and regard them as enemies."

While this was a very strong speech for the Major to make, and that jovial smile that usually crowned his speeches this time was lacking; yet his tone was

gentle and unmixed with any feeling of harshness. Martha was stunned and for a time reflective. To continue her course was then to incur not only the disapproval, but likely the loss of Major's friendship; and if he felt so keenly upon the subject, of course Andy did too. It would mean the loss of his love. Along with this would come social ostracism, contempt, and ridicule. Could she have confined her reflections solely to Andy, and what a loss of love meant in her life, she might have reached a different conclusion; but her combative nature was aroused, as well as her missionary spirit. As she sat reflecting, the Major remained quiet, thinking that she would at least decide to postpone action until Andy returned. He had illimitable faith in love as a power to control, and believed that if he could induce her to defer matters until she and Andy could discuss it, all would be well. He realized further that if love could not control her, nothing else could. She looked up from the floor where her eyes had been buried, and with a smile as fixed as that of Calvin when he lighted the torch around the stake to which Servetus was bound, she said in a voice untouched with the slightest emotion:

"Very well, I will take a house where I can receive the negroes whom I invited to discuss their condition and my plans for ameliorating it."

A voice from the sky would not have astonished the Major more than this announcement.

"Get a house!" exclaimed he. "Why, what do you mean?"

"Just what I say, Major. I am going to get a

house and move into it. There I will invite the leading negroes of this city and confer with them; and I shall do so the first thing in the morning."

"My God, Martha, you don't know what you are talking about!" exclaimed he.

"Oh, yes; I do," replied she pleasantly and smiling sweetly. "I know full well. I also know what it means to me. Every door will be closed, even yours, as well as Andy's; but, Major, I am so convinced of my duty that I shall submit without a murmur." Looking across the street, she continued in that imperturbable manner: "I like that house just across the way which has a rent card upon it."

The Major was stunned this time, and looked in silence at the beautiful woman in front of him—a polished piece of steel that could reflect like a mirror, yet sustain a weight a hundred times its own.

"You mean," exclaimed he finally, "that you are going to move away from here and take a house to which you will invite negro men and negro women?"

"That's exactly what I mean; and I shall do so in the morning," sounded from those well-formed, soft lips, like the clear, sharp tones of a bell on a frosty night.

"No! No Not in the morning! You will wait until Andy returns, it is due him!" demanded the Major, rising in his excitement.

"No, I shall not wait! He would object, and a scene between us would follow, which I do not care for. If the house just across is suitable, I shall take it first thing in the morning."

The Major's knees could not withstand this shock, and he dropped into a chair; and for once was speechless. After a time those great eyes, lighted with kindness, and that soft tongue, melting in charity, renewed its appeal. But it was in vain. She was inexorable. Once more he pleaded her love for Andy and his for her, saying:

"You realize you may be going from him never to return? That his love is to be cast aside as a stone. My God! Martha, can you do that? He loves you, and if you destroy that love God himself cannot sympathize with you. Wait! wait!"

That head, set so firmly upon her shoulders, shook deliberately, and that mellow, soft voice sounded as sternly as that of the executioner of Lady Jane Grey. It was: "No; I have decided."

"Talk to my wife first about it, she can explain matters better than I can, and there is a sympathy between women that men can't reach. Talk to Sue—let me call her. I'll go away and let you discuss it." As he arose she caught him by the sleeve and pulled him back.

"Please do not," said she. "I do not want to discuss it with Mrs. Sims, and I would prefer you say nothing to her about it. I will quietly move out in the morning, and then all will be over!"

The Major trembled. He felt that it was his duty to his dead friend to shield his daughter from what he considered her doom, but how he was to do this was beyond him. He pleaded again for her to wait until Andy returned, and talked of the pleasure of life as the first duty one owed one's self. But it

had no effect. The little wren upon her nest defies the hawk, and this charming young woman, convinced of her duty, defied the world.

"Is that house suitable for me?" she finally asked. "Yes, yes; that is the Dixon house, which is well furnished and would be in every way suitable," replied he solemnly, as he glanced over at the vacant home of his friend.

"Then I shall take it in the morning and move in."

Old Harriet was seen now hobbling along the street in front, and as Major's eye fell upon her he turned to Miss Marbury and said:

"If you are determined to go, yonder is old Harriet, who is not only a great cook, but a very strong character. I want you to employ her as your body-guard, which you may stand in need of."

Miss Marbury smiled at the suggestion of needing a bodyguard; and shaking her head responded very lightly:

"I don't think I will need any such thing; and I object to her; she looks so untidy. I can't stand that."

"Ah, my dear, they all look alike."

"Oh, I intend to change that quickly," replied she, smiling significantly.

"Martha, I want you to take Harriet; you will like her, and you can rely upon her in every way," said he earnestly. As she hesitated, he continued: Martha, remember that your room is going to be kept for you; and the moment you want to come back the door is open; and you will be welcome."

Solemnly as he said this she could not restrain

a laugh, as she looked upon the idea of her retreat as ridiculous.

"Thank you," said she. "When I feel that I need a haven I shall come back; but in the meantime you can allow any of your friends to occupy the room."

The meeting was over, and the Major's heart was wrung. His step was unsteady and his mind unsettled as he strolled into his garden. He felt his own weakness. This young woman had overcome him. She retired to her room and busied herself in packing her trunks. Sustained by her sense of duty, as though God had whispered to her, she never faltered a moment.

CHAPTER XVIII

Old Harriet was sent for the next morning after the Dixon house was secured, but Harriet perceiving that Miss Marbury's accent was not Southern, looked at her critically and asked:

"Whar you fum, lady?"

"I am from Massachusetts."

"Mas-Mas-Masschusems. I never heerd of it," said Harriet, with a toss of her head.

"Why, Massachusettes is a State up North. Boston is the capital of the State. You have heard of Boston?"

"Yas, 'um, I reckon I is heerd of Bos'on. All o' you Yankees up dar, ain't yer?"

Miss Marbury smiled indulgently and replied: "Yes; oh, yes; we are what are called Yankees."

Old Harriet grunted somewhat contemptuously, and then casting a quizzical glance at Miss Marbury, exclaimed in her quaint way:

"De Yankees I's seed is cu'us."

Anxious to know just what the old woman meant, and amused at her manner, Miss Marbury inquired:

"I don't understand you. In what respect are they curious?"

"Huc! All I've ever seed eat col' victuals. I don't like dat."

"What do you want us to eat?" inquired Miss Marbury, smiling upon the old woman.

"Huc! I wants 'em to eat hot waffles, an' hot bus-

cuit an' fried chicken, an' all dat. Deh ain't nobody who ken beat me cookin' dem; an' I wants to cook fur people who likes 'em. I ken make hot rolls all right; an' you ken keep 'em until deh gits col' ef you wants; but I tecks mine hot wid plenty of butter. An' den all de Yankees I've seed doan trust we colored fo'kes."

Miss Marbury interrupted her to ask: "What do you mean?"

"Huc! You totes de keys to de pantry, an' give out everything to be cooked just like we ain't to be trusted. All our white folks down here doan do dat. Deh 'lows us to go into de pantry; and ef we tecks little things fur ourse'ves hit's all right."

"I'd rather pay you higher wages and let you buy what you want. What do you say to that?"

"Dat ain't my way," replied the old woman, shaking her head; "an' ef I cooks fur you I wants to do jes as I always been doin'. You ain't gwine to suffer."

Miss Marbury smiled indulgently and looked at the weazel-like face of this old woman. It was drawn and wrinkled and shriveled, but in her eyes there was fire; and that long hatchet-face gave indications of her eccentric nature.

"Very well," replied Miss Marbury, "Major Sims esteems you so highly that I am going to accede to your demands and you shall carry the pantry keys."

"Very well, den; I starts to cook for you. When do you want me?"

"I want you right now. I have taken this house and will move in right away."

This conversation occurred upon the sidewalk just in front of the Dixon's. Old Harriet looked at the house and then again at Miss Marbury and asked: "You ain't married is you?"

"No," replied Miss Marbury, smiling, "I am not married."

"Who's gwine to lib dar wid yer?"

"No one; you and I will be the sole occupants of the house."

Harriet arched her brows, and looked at Miss Marbury very queerly, then asked again:

"Is Major and Mrs. Sims comin' ter see you, ur is you had a fuss?"

"Oh, yes, they will come to see me. We are very friendly and have had no fuss."

"Dat's all right den; I'll go right in to sweep up, and if de house ain't pow'ful dirty, I'll soon have it in apple-pie order."

Miss Marbury handed the keys to her, and telling her to go ahead she turned and went to the Major's.

After securing the Dixon place she told Mrs. Sims of her intention in the presence of the Major, and that good woman in her astonishment raised her hands and dropped into a chair without a word. The Major the evening before had told his wife of Miss Marbury's intention, but had asked her to say nothing, as he thought she might upon reflection reconsider. Her declaration now indicated she had no such idea, and Mrs. Sims felt so grieved as well as shocked that she of necessity had to take a chair. The Major diplomatically left the two women alone, as he felt his presence would do no good, and might

•

do harm. The conference was not long, for Miss Marbury soon indicated that her decision was made and was irrevocable. Mrs. Sims pleaded and argued, but to no purpose; and at last she put her arms around Miss Marbury and cried.

"My dear! my dear!" said she, after removing her arms from Miss Marbury's neck, "I love you almost as a child, and I feel that you are committing a blunder that will wreck your life;—certainly, your happiness. You don't know what you are doing—have no conception of it. You will be misunderstood, not only by all the whites, but by the negroes themselves; and you will have to pay the penalty. And, my dear, it will be severe enough. God only knows how you will suffer and make your friends suffer."

Miss Marbury, however, was like adamant and not to be moved. Mrs. Sims renewed her plea, and this time upon Andy's account, and talked of love, of its influence, and how it should be cherished and never thwarted. That life was meant for happiness, and love was its basis. To recklessly fling it aside was a crime. After all this Miss Marbury smiled complacently and, shaking her head, replied with a serious face and a steady eye:

"Mrs. Sims, I know all that you say is true; and it is with a heavy heart that I take this step; yet, feeling as I do, that it is my duty, I am compelled to proceed."

"Remember, Martha," said Mrs. Sims, with tears in her eyes, "dear and I remain your staunch friends and defenders. We understand you, and this house will always be your haven; and don't feel any hesi-

tancy in returning at any time, whether we are in or not. Your room shall be kept for you, and God grant that you will see the error of your way in a very short while, and come back."

Miss Marbury could hardly restrain her tears, for she was affected deeply by the loving appeal of this saintly woman around whose head the holy shekinah well might linger.

"I will remember what you say," replied Miss Marbury, as she extended her hand. "I expect you and the Major to come over to see me, and I shall certainly drop in to see you very often—unless, of course, in the light of the censure that shall descend upon my head, it becomes necessary for you to drop me from your list of friends or acquaintances."

This suggestion made both women quiver, for both felt that such a thing was possible. Mrs. Sims put her arms around Miss Marbury and hung for a time upon her neck, and it was in this position the Major saw them as he returned. For a moment he looked on, and then stepped back into the library and waited to see what it meant. In a few moments Miss Marbury passed the door and, seeing him, stopped, but only for a moment; then proceeded to her room and finished placing all of her things in her trunks preparatory to having them sent over to the Dixon house.

By ten o'clock they were delivered, and she began setting things to rights. Harriet was commissioned to go out and buy a list of provisions, while Miss Marbury sat down to consider what should be the first step toward the execution of her

plans. It would be to hold a conference with Bishop Gately, and if he coincided with her views to begin work at once. To her delight, she found his name in the telephone book and invited him to come up to see her. He didn't live very far away, not being a dweller in Darktown, and before she expected it he presented himself at her house and rang the bell. Harriet had not as yet returned, so Miss Marbury opened the door and, recognizing him, extended her hand most cordially and invited him in. She led the way to the library, a most attractive room. Miss Marbury had made some changes in it, simplifying it as much as she could; and in one corner had placed a desk she had found in another part of the house, for she would make the library her workshop. The Bishop glanced around with much satisfaction.

He had a big, yellow face, and possessed all the marks of the negro—heavy, broad, flat nose, thick sensual lips, which almost hung apart from their weight. His eyes were very small and dark, and there was a glitter to them suggesting viciousness. His hair was black, and while not so kinky as that of the Guinea negro, was yet not straight. It was parted in the middle and very carefully combed. He was dressed in a rather clerical garb, consisting of a long frock coat, dark trousers and white waistcoat. His neck was short, thick and fat, which necessitated a turn-down collar, under which a white cambric bow lay snugly tucked. His shoes were polished, and when he appeared he held gloves in his left hand

and a walking-cane in his right. A silk hat kept company to these trappings of genteel dress.

Miss Marbury was pleased with this show of refinement, and smiled as she thought of some of the descriptions she had heard of the negroes inattention to the matter of clothing. The Bishop sought a large leather chair and, without waiting for an invitation to be seated, slowly dropped into it, and looked around like one who felt at home. His manner was patronizing, very. Miss Marbury took a seat some little distance away and, observing the attitude of the Bishop, her sensitiveness was alert. She was not indignant, however, but alive to the fact that the demeanor of the Bishop was that of one whose presence had been sought and who deemed himself an adviser. The Bishop was what is ordinarily called a strong man. He was well educated, although not a college-bred man. The many negro colleges now scattered throughout the South, some in his immediate vicinity, had not been organized until he was very near grown. His education had been obtained in the public schools and by his varied reading. It was with some curiosity that he critically pitched his eye around the room and observed its every detail; and rising without a word stepped ponderously—for he weighed some two hundred and thirty pounds—over to the bookcases and glanced over the books. Turning, he remarked freely:

“I know Mr. Dixon, the owner of this house, and he is a very intelligent man. Now abroad, I believe?”

The man was dominating, and familiar to a degree that Miss Marbury resented, and now she replied curtly:

"Yes; I think he is abroad."

She meant for him to understand he must change his manner. The Bishop, if he noticed her tone, gave no indication of it, but strode to the window and looked out upon the street, alive with carriages, automobiles, and pedestrians; then, turning, walked over to the seat he had vacated and dropped into it with a heaviness that was alarming.

The Bishop had been North many times, and had been into homes of well-to-do-people, even dining with notable men and women; and it was the first time he had ever been into the home of a Southern man. This thought possessed him, and a little feeling of triumph percolated through his nerve cells. Certainly, to sit in the presence of a young white woman at her invitation was very pleasing to his vanity. It fed his dignity and increased his pompousness—for the Bishop was pompous. His position so made him, for there is nothing quite so high and mighty among the negroes as their bishops. Negro churches are not only houses of worship, but the fountain of social life; and membership in some is one's card to social position. Not even in the days of the Covenanters, nor afterward among the Puritans in England or New England, did the church mean quite so much to its members; nor did the pastors in those days have any more influence upon their flock than does the negro preacher upon his. He is not only the spiritual adviser, but very greatly

the social arbiter. Very often, also, is he the political leader.

Old Harriet now returned, and not knowing that Miss Marbury had company rushed in to tell what she had purchased for them to eat. Seeing the Bishop she stopped suddenly, as one who discovered he was about to rush blindly upon some dangerous object. Both Miss Marbury and the Bishop observed her consternation, for every feature of her face became a question mark. Without a word she was about to turn to go from the room when Miss Marbury said:

"Aunt Harriet, you know Bishop Gately, do you not?"

Harriet turned quickly, and now upon her drawn face was defiance. Those little eyes were flashing like a cat's when bayed by dogs.

"Yas 'um, I knows him," snapped she.

Had Miss Marbury not seen Harriet's expression and realized its meaning she would have caught from her surliness of tone her disapproval of the Bishop and his presence. The Bishop smiled complacently, and he stretched out his big legs and reclined indolently in the chair and, without making any pretense to speak to Harriet, remarked pompously, as he looked at Miss Marbury:

"Yes; of course she knows her Bishop."

His voice was as deep and sonorous as his manner was patronizing. None of this was lost upon Harriet, and feeling that the Bishop looked upon her as a mere atom, her resentment was as keen as her

spirit was aggressive; and her tone expressed her contempt as she replied:

"Oh, yes, I know de Bishop; knowed him ever since he wus a boy, and I can't say much fur him neider."

He chuckled jovially at this, and looked at Miss Marbury quizzically.

Miss Marbury was nonplussed and hardly knew just what to say. She, herself, resented the Bishop's offensive assumption of superiority.

"Is dat all you wants wid me, Miss Mat?" asked Harriet, who had at once found out Miss Marbury's given name and shortened it to suit herself. Miss Marbury thought it was time to allow Harriet to go, and looking at her nodded her assent. Harriet tossed her head and straightened that old figure bent by years of toil and stalked from the room with her heels hitting the floor in heavy, regular tread. Miss Marbury could scarcely refrain from smiling at the manner of the old woman and, thinking it might embarrass the Bishop—an impossible thing—she said quickly:

"Now, Bishop, we will begin to discuss a subject I am very greatly interested in, and for which I have invited you to come."

The Bishop nodded his head two or three times and, smiling jocosely, replied:

"I am at your service, my dear madam; and rest assured that your interest shall be mine."

Again Miss Marbury's sensitive, refined nature as well as her independent spirit—which had never yet been dominated by any one—was aroused no little

by the condescension of this big, burly man. She began to think she had made a mistake in selecting Bishop Gately over others she might have chosen, but not knowing them she concluded to proceed, thinking that if he proved unsatisfactory she could get rid of him.

"Bishop," began she, "while I have only been South a few days, I made quite a study of what is usually called the negro problem before I came, and am greatly interested in its proper and immediate settlement, and since being here I have realized that it can be done none too soon either."

"Very true, very true, my dear madam," rolled thunderously from the Bishop's thick lips and expansive lungs.

"It is my idea, Bishop, that after education,—which, of course, is the first step toward elevating any race,—I deem the teaching of what might be termed the social amenities of life among the negroes as the essential thing."

"Very true, very true, my dear madam," once more rolled ponderously from the Bishop.

"Just how to do that of course is open to discussion; but I have a plan which I think will be found to be well thought out."

"I shall be delighted to sit and listen to your plan, assuring you of my sympathy and cordial support," replied the Bishop, in a voice that resounded not only through the room but rolled as distant thunder in the kitchen where old Harriet stood frowning in her anger. The big fat Bishop was not a keen judge

of human nature, and had not seen the spirit and indomitable will of Miss Marbury; not yet.

"Bishop," continued she, "first I have ample means, and can get all that may be necessary for my plans, even to extend them throughout the Southern States, where the negro composes such a large part of the population." The Bishop nodded his head in approval. "I think an assembly hall," continued she, "should be erected in some proper place in this city, in which we shall have large and well furnished reception-rooms and lecture-rooms,—for it is my intention to have the best talent of the country, in sympathy with our views, deliver addresses upon such subjects as we may choose. It is further my object to have music-rooms and such other departments as shall be needed in that uplifting we are seeking. Major Sims asserts—and it strikes me as very sensible indeed—that imitation and observation are the greatest schools that can be established for the benefit of coming generations. If this be true, by gathering together the most refined and cultured of the negro race, and inviting from time to time others of distinguished acquirements to meet with them, we can begin to impart those refinements of manner and conduct so essential to the progress of the African race."

"Your plan is ideal; and is very practical, as well as original," responded the Bishop ponderously.

"I am glad you agree with me; and now, Bishop, I do not want the less fortunate of the negroes to think that this assembly hall is erected for the ex-

clusive use of the more fortunate class; for I believe in the solidarity of the negro race."

"Absolutely, absolutely, my dear madam," rolled again sonorously through the room, although it was not pronounced quite so loudly as before. The solidarity suggestion was confusing, not only to him, but to old Harriet, who with arms akimbo stood in the hallway hearing everything said, but comprehending very little of its meaning. Solidarity was entirely beyond her.

"I think it unfortunate," continued Miss Marbury, "that the race has become divided in color; and I should so much like to see it once again return to its native hue of black."

The Bishop cleared his throat at this, and looked upon the floor instead of at Miss Marbury, and seemed to be in deep reflection.

She, thinking this was likely a new idea to him, over which he was cudgeling his brain, waited a moment and then pursued her theme:

"If the negro race should become divided on the color line—as some say it already has—it would retard its progress greatly, if not altogether; so, therefore, one of the basic principles of this institution shall be to teach the negro race to be proud of its color and desire to maintain it."

The Bishop did not lack native shrewdness, and, beginning to realize that Miss Marbury was a woman of decision of character and learning, and she had ample means—or could control them—to carry out her purpose, became aroused to the importance of

the meeting. His eyes were now lifted from the floor and became riveted upon her as he replied:

"You have indeed given this subject profound thought; and I am astonished beyond measure. As you say, there can be no unity of the race until it returns to its original color. Of course there will be some opposition to this, and it will take a long time to bring it about; but it can be done with wise and discreet measures. To announce your sentiment in the beginning would likely deter your good work; and in my opinion that end is to be sought for very gradually."

For the moment Miss Marbury reflected. Through her mind was running the opinion that Major Sims had expressed when he said: "One drop of white blood raises the negro above his race; and he clings to it as the one mark that makes him superior to the black." She scanned the Bishop's face and wondered how he felt upon that very point; but for the present she concluded not to ask him. Finally, she said:

"I realize that everything can't be accomplished at once, and that progress will be slow; and that I will need the co-operation of all classes as well as colors. I shall try to be discreet, yet I can't help but feel that this one point should be made clear to the blacks, as it will enlist their sympathies; and certainly the mulattoes should not object."

Quickly the Bishop interposed:

"Oh, some will, some will; and some of the most influential; both among the men and women. That point, as I say, must be discreetly handled. "The

mulatto women take much pride in the lightness of their color and might resent the idea you suggest. We must bring up the blacks to a state of refinement before you can begin to preach your doctrine. It will then receive a more patient hearing."

This struck Miss Marbury as perhaps a very sensible view, but she was so intent upon the correctness of her idea that she did not intend to have it thrust aside, and after a moment's consideration answered:

"I doubt if you are correct, Bishop; but I'll consider it."

"Hem!" responded he, "it is best, for the present at least to say nothing of it. You will have to depend upon the mulatto women almost altogether for your support in teaching blacks the amenities you refer to."

"Are the mulattoes so much more refined and educated than the blacks?" questioned she quickly.

The Bishop chuckled and responded in his patronizing way:

"Yes, yes; you will find that out. Indeed, there are scarcely any black women who are well educated or refined. Of course, there are some, and as time goes on there will be more."

"Well, Bishop, I want to begin work right away, and I would like you to invite a number of your friends whom you think will be interested in our work to come here to-morrow afternoon—if that is not too early for you—and we will get them interested in the erection of the assembly hall, and its purposes."

"Very good, very good! I shall be delighted to undertake that; and I will have a goodly number here. For the first meeting or so I think it best to have only women present—no men."

Miss Marbury, not comprehending his intention of dominating, assented to this; and in a few moments the Bishop arose and took his departure. As the heavy footsteps of the Bishop died away Miss Marbury strolled around the room, stopping in front of a portrait of one of the Dixons, whose face betokened great strength of character as well as intelligence; and gazing at it said, as if in defiance of what the man in life had thought:

"You are all wrong; I am right. The solution of the negro problem lies in their refinement. Bring them up to the plane of the whites and all struggles between the races will be over. Each race will know its position and maintain it. The negro race, proud of itself, will be satisfied to remain as a separate distinct race, and not wish to intermarry with the whites. That's the solution that God intended; and I have begun upon the plan to bring this about."

CHAPTER XIX

Harriet watched the Bishop go from the house, and stood sullenly waiting for Miss Marbury to come back in the kitchen. She didn't understand such conduct on the part of a white woman, and was about to conclude that she had made a mistake in agreeing to become her cook. Fortunately, Miss Marbury didn't go into the kitchen, but went up to her room to look about fixing it up in a cozy way. Finally, she dropped into a chair and sat meditating upon her plan for elevating the negro, and also upon the conduct of Bishop Gately. She realized that he was a man of force and intellectual power, but resented his familiarity and condescending manner. She thought of the Major, and how he would smile over the description of the Bishop's conduct, and Harriet's resentment of his presence. However, she had no idea of telling the Major anything about this. With a flash, sudden as unexpected lightning, came a suggestion of what Andy would think when he returned. She sprang from her chair and paced the floor.

"Andy! Andy! Andy! What will you say? Your love will turn to hate—and Dorothy, humph! How that chin will rise and those lips curl in disdain at the very mention of my name."

Again she dropped into a chair. Like Caesar, she had plunged and crossed the Rubicon. There was no return. She didn't regret her action, not

at all; yet she felt sorry for Andy, and her love for him called to her in a voice of despair. She remained in her room until Harriet called her down to lunch. She took her seat, but had no appetite, although Harriet had done her best to make tempting dishes, and stood by with folded arms and ruffled countenance looking at her. Miss Marbury never noticed this, and said nothing complimentary of Harriet's skill as a cook. This added fuel to the fires already burning in old Harriet's bosom over her conduct. The old woman disliked the Bishop very much; and Miss Marbury's conduct in receiving him, as she would Major Sims, and sitting down and talking to him as an equal, was something she had never witnessed before on the part of a white woman, and it made her think Miss Marbury was not of the class of white women she knew or wanted to know. Harriet had been a slave of wealthy people, and had a great contempt for the "po' trash," as the negroes called the whites who were not possessed of wealth and slaves; and since freedom she had never worked for any but what she called the quality, and more, did not intend to. That afternoon she continued to mumble to herself as she straightened things up in the kitchen, and afterward as she sat upon the back steps looking into the yard. Somewhat before the time to begin supper she strolled over to the Major's, determined to acquaint him with what had occurred that morning respecting the Bishop's visit, and inform him that Miss Marbury would have to get another cook, as she held herself too high to cook for a woman who had no more

respect for herself than to receive negroes in her library. The Major, however, was out, and she returned without seeing him. For supper she had fried chicken, hot waffles, hot biscuit, and delicious coffee, and stood again with her arms folded to hear what Miss Marbury had to say of her cooking. This time Miss Marbury looked at her with a pleasant smile as she said:

"Aunt Harriet, you are indeed a great cook; your chicken is fried just as well as Malinda's, and your waffles are just delicious." Harriet's nose curled in contempt at the comparison. Malinda, indeed! In response she growled:

"Humph! Malinda never seed de day she could cook like me; an' pow'ful few aire in my class as a cook."

Miss Marbury smiled and nodded her head assentingly, as she took another waffle.

"I don't know but what you are right. Certainly, I never tasted any waffles as good as these; they are so light."

"You don't put enough butter on 'em; deh's got to be buttered freely, an' dat's good butter; I tasted it befo' I bought it. I al'ays buys de bes'. Dat's de way I was fotch up."

Miss Marbury smiled at Harriet's manner and her mode of speech, but she did not understand the sullen tone Harriet used, for of course she did not comprehend that the old woman was greatly offended at her receiving Bishop Gately. In fact, she would have been astonished to learn Harriet's sentiments upon the subject.

That evening Major and Mrs. Sims called and chatted for some time, but nothing was said of the Bishop's visit, as neither Major nor Mrs. Sims were aware of it; and Miss Marbury did not feel called upon to say anything about it. Not that she was ashamed of it, but for the present she did not care to tell what she was doing. Mrs. Sims referred to Dorothy, and said that she had been over that afternoon. For a moment the conversation lulled, then Miss Marbury laughed and said:

"I suppose she was greatly shocked to know that I had taken this house and moved in?"

"Oh, yes, yes," the Major responded quietly. In fact, she was beside herself with indignation."

"I suppose she will ignore me the next time we meet?"

"Dear Dolly," exclaimed Mrs. Sims, not answering the question, "is very high-tempered, and very exacting."

Miss Marbury understood the meaning of this, and smiled; and then her face clouded, for she thought of Andy. How Dorothy would rake his feelings with her sarcasm; and how the public would smile superciliously as they looked at him and recalled how his sweetheart had acted—taken a house and received negroes. Her heart quivered as she thought of his suffering, and for a moment she condemned herself, as the suggestion arose that she had humiliated him unnecessarily. "I could just as easily have gone to some other city and spared his feelings," she mused.

Major and Mrs. Sims made their visit short. They

had called from kindness, and their hearts were too heavy to talk long to the woman whose conduct they deemed unjust to Andy, as well as to themselves. They had, however, no idea of turning their backs upon her. The Major could not do this on account of his love for her father, as well as that he had for her. But he resented her course. Miss Marbury realized to some extent how the public would look upon her, but not fully so; for she had no idea of the depth of feeling that people of the South had upon anything that indicated an attempt to bring about social equality between whites and blacks. That all the virulence of contempt and scorn would be meted out she did not understand; yet if she had it is likely she would not have altered her course in the slightest. Having taken a position, she knew not how to turn back. Had she been a man instead of a woman, it would have been well-nigh impossible for her to have occupied the house she had chosen. In fact, the lease would have been cancelled instantly upon the opening the house to negroes.

The Bishop, upon leaving, had gone and invited his party to call upon Miss Marbury, and at once it was repeated from house to house, and the upper class of the negroes was in ecstasy. All had seen Miss Marbury at Big Becky, and now when it was known that she had millions at her command, and had taken a house upon Peachtree to receive them, and was going to erect an assembly hall, joy was rampant and expectation tiptoed in delight. If a Moses had not come, certainly one equal to him, who was to open the way for social elevation.

That night Miss Marbury's sleep was rather fitful, for everything was so new, the house, the bed, the people, her position. Her mind was too greatly excited for rest, and after each nap she would awake suddenly dreaming of Andy, and as she thought of how he would feel upon his return her conscience smote her. At times the debate was fierce over the question whether she did right to sacrifice his love and hers in order to take up the cause of the negro. Each time, however, she was controlled by the voices of the past speaking through her ardent nature. She could no more resist following her convictions than she could help being tall instead of short, or light instead of dark. The past had regulated these as it was now regulating her. Her ancestors had practiced self-denial for ages and had stood for a principle; she could do no less. When she arose the next morning she felt like a bedraggled traveler hunting for an inn. Again she recalled Andy, and her heart quaked; but bringing her jaws firmly together as though refusing the cup of joy, she cast aside all thought of him, and facing the mirror completed her toilet. Such was her stoicism that she smiled as she looked at herself and said audibly: "The struggle is not improving my beauty."

Harriet now summoned her to breakfast, and going down she found that faithful servant still grum; but not realizing its cause, she spoke to her cheerily and again praised her cooking. Turning those opalescent eyes upon the old woman, she told her that she was going to have quite a party in the afternoon, and desired to serve tea and cakes, and

commissioned her to lay in a sufficient quantity for the purpose. Not knowing the kind of reception Miss Marbury had in view,—supposing, of course, it was for white people—Harriet was delighted with the idea. Miss Marbury noticed this and smiled over it, thinking that Harriet saw something in it for herself.

That afternoon when Miss Marbury summoned her into the library and instructed her to bring in a tablecloth, teapot, cups and so on, the old creature was all in a flutter to see that everything was just right.

"I des loves ter fix for parties!" exclaimed she, as she stood by aiding in arranging cups upon the table.

"Yes, it is very pleasant," responded Miss Marbury, changing the cups from the position Harriet had placed them.

"The cups must be arranged just so, Aunt Harriet."

The old woman stood back and watched Miss Marbury change the position of the cups, and said with some little feeling:

"Dat ain't de way Mis' Little does it; and nobody ken beat her 'rangin' fur a tea."

Miss Marbury had met Mrs. Little, who was one of the leaders of the social world of the city, and smiled over Harriet's remark, but made no reply.

"Oh, the sugar, Aunt Harriet, you haven't brought the sugar; but I am going into the pantry and I will get it!"

Harriet now glanced over the table and mumbled to herself:

"Humph! She's one of yo' pertic'ler ones; but she can't teach me nothin'. I's bin wid white fo'kes, who knows too much. Dat I is."

Miss Marbury returned with the bowl of sugar and, looking at Harriet in astonishment, asked:

"Why, Aunt Harriet, where is all the sugar you bought yesterday?"

"It's dar," responded Aunt Harriet solemnly.

"Why, one-half of it certainly is gone," said Miss Marbury, a trifle vexed.

Old Harriet chuckled, and raising her brows looked at Miss Marbury and said naively: "Sugar won't stay wid yer; it has a way of goin'."

Remembering what the Major had said about servants in the South helping themselves to the larder to furnish their friends with whatever they might need, she smiled and looking at Harriet significantly, asked: "Did you have company last night?"

Harriet realized Miss Marbury understood now what had become of the sugar, and grinned as she replied:

"Yes, 'em; my two da'ghters en deh husbands come ter see me, an' deh chillun."

"Have they many children?" asked Miss Marbury, arching her brows slightly.

Harriet understood and laughed. "Yes, 'um," said she, "a good many; but deh only brought six wid 'em. Deh's plenty of sugar left fur de party, ain't deh?"

"I suppose so," replied Miss Marbury, in a dry tone of disapproval.

"Miss Sue don't use any sugar in her tea, but de Major, he takes three lumps in his'n," remarked Harriet apologetically.

"I don't suppose the Major or Miss Sue will be here," replied Miss Marbury, as she stepped to the table and continued arranging cups.

"Huh come?" exclaimed Harriet in astonishment, looking over Miss Marbury critically from head to foot.

"I don't suppose the Bishop invited them."

The words had hardly escaped Miss Marbury's lips when a cup dropped from old Harriet's hand, for her astonishment was so great over this information that she lost control of her muscles and now shouted excitedly:

"De—de—de Bishop! De Bishop! Er—what—aire you talkin' about?"

Miss Marbury looked at Harriet in surprise, and replied a little angrily:

"I asked Bishop Gately to invite some of his friends here to discuss certain plans I have for the solidarity of the negro race."

Harriet placed her hands upon her hips and looked at Miss Marbury with defiance. She did not know what was meant by solidarity, and did not care; it was enough for her to know that Miss Marbury had invited negroes into her house, and that she, Harriet Grant, would be expected to wait upon them.

Miss Marbury observed the indignation that over-

spread Harriet's weazen-like features, and continued:

"I want to elevate your race, Aunt Harriet; aid it to rise to higher and better things."

But this explanation in no way mollified the outraged feelings of old Harriet, and with great contempt she exclaimed: "You gwine ter have niggers here in yo' house?"

Miss Marbury responded with dignity: "Yes; the Bishop will invite a few negro women to call here to-day, and I thought I would have tea and cakes for them."

"What!" shouted Harriet, in a tone of fury, and glaring at Miss Marbury for a moment continued in the same tone: "You gwine ter eat wid 'em?"

Miss Marbury smiled, and looking at Harriet replied very pleasantly: "Yes, Aunt Harriet. Why are you so astonished?"

Harriet gave a deep grunt like that of an infuriated beast, and turned away as she said sullenly:

"I's never heard of sich a thing! I wusn't brought up to wait on niggers! No I warn't, an' more 'en dat, I ain't gwine ter begin now."

Miss Marbury thought it best to mollify her, and laughed jovially as she exclaimed: "Why, Aunt Harriet, are you opposed to elevating your own race?" The old woman switched around angrily and scowling said:

"If I had a-knowed dat you wus a-gwine ter intertain niggers you couldn't 'a' hired me! Dat you couldn't! An' I walks right out'n dis house! Dat I does!"

Miss Marbury continued to laugh and, looking at her as though surprised, said very softly:

"Why, Aunt Harriet, you astonish me. I am trying to do my best for you and your people, and you speak of deserting me? Have you no love for your race?"

Harriet stood with arms still akimbo and with a glare of fury upon her face. She didn't answer at once, but just stood fixed as a monument, while Miss Marbury continued to smile and looked at her.

"De Major recermended you ter me, an' axed me to cook fur you; an' to look after you; but he didn't know you wus a-gwine ter have niggers in your house!"

"Oh, yes, he did!" exclaimed Miss Marbury, interrupting her.

Harriet stepped back in astonishment at this information and shouted loudly:

"Whut! Whut! Major Sims knowed you were a-gwine ter have niggers in yo' house?"

"Yes," laughingly responded Miss Marbury, "he knew it, and did Mrs. Sims also." .

"Narry a word did deh say ter me about it!" Narry one!" declared Harriet sullenly.

Miss Marbury continued laughing pleasantly as she moved around the room arranging various things while old Harriet's eyes were riveted upon her every action. Finally she said in a tone of reproof:

"Mis' Marbury, you gwine ter git in trouble havin' niggers here to eat wid yer; an' I got er reptation to keep up, and I don't know that I gwine ter stay wid ye."

Miss Marbury turned, looked at her, then approaching her and laying her hands upon the shoulders of the old woman said in a very winning way:

"Aunt Harriet, you must not desert me, for I am doing all I can for your race, and I need your support."

The old woman was very much mollified by this speech and by Miss Marbury's gentle manner, but stood for a moment in silence.

"Ve'y well; I'll stay, but you gwine ter git in trouble. I'll stay jes' to take keer o' you, for you gwine ter need me."

Miss Marbury smiled and thanked her.

Harriet now asked in a whisper: "Who you gwine ter have here?"

"I don't know," responded Miss Marbury. "The Bishop has not informed me whom he intended to invite."

Harriet stood reflecting and then announced:

"Mis' Mat, deh's a lot o' niggers here I can't stan', an' mo', I ain't gwine ter try ter stan' 'em. If de Bishop ax any of dem, deh's liable ter be a rucus, kase deh's got ter keep dere place 'roun' me."

"Oh, he'll invite genteel people, and there will be no occasion for any display of feeling, Aunt Harriet, not a bit."

"De Bishop ain't no sweet-smelling flower hisse'l," replied Harriet, her anger once again beginning to manifest itself.

"But, Aunt Harriet, none of us are perfect, and we must put up with the peculiarities of other peo-

ple. Now you stick by me, for I'm going to do what's right."

"Very well, I'll stick to you long as I ken; but when I sees things got to stop, deh's got to stop. Dat's des hit!"

Miss Marbury smiled over this and nodded her assent. The front door bell was now heard to ring, and Harriet started for it while Miss Marbury prepared to retreat. In a moment Harriet returned and, unnoticed by Miss Marbury, laid a package upon the table.

"Who was that at the door?" asked she.

"Nobody. Jes sumpen fur me," responded Harriet indifferently.

In a moment Miss Marbury announced her intention of going to her room and told Harriet if anyone came before she returned to invite them in and give them seats. As she started out she saw the unmarked bundle that Harriet had brought in and picked it up, and taking off the wrapper while Harriet had her back turned, discovered that it was a bottle. Reading the label, she exclaimed in astonishment: "Why, Aunt Harriet, what's this?"

The old woman jumped around, realizing that Miss Marbury had examined her package. That old face, so strong, and pointed in character, now bore every sign of humiliation. She couldn't even smile, merely grunted. Miss Marbury read aloud from the label: "Anti-Kink; use freely every night." Harriet now reached for the bottle and exclaimed: "Oh, dat's mine; gi' it ter me!"

Miss Marbury drew away smiling and continued

to read aloud: "Use freely every night and brush vigorously upon application with a very stiff brush." "Why, Aunt Harriet, what is it?"

Harriet exhibited all the signs of mortification as she replied: "Huc! Dat's fur yo' hair—to straighten it."

"To straighten your hair! Why, what do you mean?" exclaimed Miss Marbury, astonished.

"Huc! It makes a nigger's hair jes like white fo'kes," said Harriet, now laughing shamefacedly.

"What! Makes your hair just like white folkes! Why, Aunt Harriet, *you—you* believe that?"

"Yas, 'um; an' hit'll do it! At least, it does some o' 'em dat a-way. Ol' Mandy Ware's ha'r is got as straight as yourn; an' dat done it."

Miss Marbury looked over the bottle critically. "Aunt Harriet," finally said she, "nothing will do that permanently, and it's a useless expenditure of money and an exhibition of vanity. It surprises me very greatly in you."

Harriet was crushed by this exposure, and her spirit was limp; but in defense, she finally said:

"I'd like ter have straight ha'r, so I could do it up jes like you do; and ol' Mandy Ware can do it, as well as a lot o' 'em. I have never used it yit, but I heerd so much of it I thought I'd try one bottle."

"What does it cost?" asked Miss Marbury.

"Dollar," replied Harriet shortly.

"Mrs. Ware is a mulatto, and had straight hair anyway," announced Miss Marbury in an explanatory way.

"Huc! No, she didn't; her ha'r was jes as kinky

as mine till she used dat. But I ain't gwine ter try ter change de color o' my ha'r as she did hern." Then she continued: "Huc! Her ha'r looks like yallow mulasses candy."

Miss Marbury looked over the bottle once more and read upon the opposite side: "Dr. Bull's Anti-Kink. Guaranteed to straighten hair if directions are implicitly followed. One dollar a bottle." She was now very serious, for here was a new phase of negro character she had not heard of except in a jocular way. Negro women were not alone striving to imitate some of the whites in coloring their hair, but now they were trying to straighten it that they might follow the fashion in dressing it.

The doorbell rang, and as Harriet started toward it Miss Marbury, concluding she would go to her room, said hurriedly: "Invite them in, Harriet, and say I'll be down in a few moments."

As she went out Harriet seized her bottle of Anti-Kink and ran into the kitchen with it; and returning went to the door. In a few moments three mulatto women came into the room. Mrs. Mandy Ware, who was dressed partly for the street and partly in calling attire. She was the same who had called upon Miss Marbury the Sunday before so flashily dressed. With her were Mrs. Pace and Mrs. Grundy, both overdressed. Mrs. Ware looked at the tea table and her face lighted up with delight as she exclaimed: "Look'y! We are gwine ter have tea and cakes. My land!"

The other two women exhibited their astonishment, as well as delight, and all ran over to the table

and examined everything in detail, while old Harriet stood looking on with great contempt.

"Ain't it lovely?" exclaimed Mrs. Pace.

"Whoo! This is life!" shouted Mrs. Grundy, as she turned and smiled condescendingly upon Harriet.

"I should say so!" exclaimed Mrs. Ware, and looking around continued: "Didn't I tell you she wus a fine 'oman? Harriet, how is she dressed?"

In a tone of disgust Harriet snapped: "Dressed like she ought to be dressed; and not like you 'ens, nudder."

"Oh, Harriet, you aire so unconventionable!" exclaimed Mrs. Ware superciliously.

"I reckon, Har'et, you better tell Miss Marbury we are here; if you will be so condisceindin'," said Mrs. Pace.

"She knows you are here!" exclaimed Harriet angrily, not moving a step.

"But she 'specks us to be 'nounced; dat's de way de white ladies do," said Mrs. Ware pompously.

Mrs. Grundy, who had been walking around the room examining everything, now turned to Harriet and said: "Har'et, run up an' 'nounce us to yo' mistress."

Harriet advanced a few steps in a war-like manner. These were the very women she had referred to when she declared there were some she was unable to get on with, and, now in fury, exclaimed: "Nounc *you! you! you!* Who is you but an uppity set of nobodies?"

Mrs. Ware retreated a few steps before the ad-

vancing Harriet and, laughing, opened a card case and produced a very large visiting card, at the sight of which Mrs. Grundy and Mrs. Pace likewise produced theirs, and each extended them to Harriet.

"Teck dese, Har'et, to Miss Marbury, as you 'nounce us, and you will say: "Mis' Ware, Mis' Pace and Mis' Grundy.'"

"Huc! And you call yo'se'ves Mis?" exclaimed Harriet, with lofty disdain; and taking the cards extended threw them upon the floor and, looking at Mrs. Ware, continued threateningly: "If I had my way I'd throw you out'en de winder! That's whut I'd do wid sech as you!"

The three mulatto women laughed loudly, and all stood together in front of the old woman looking upon her with scorn. Harriet stood considering whether or not she would pitch each one of them from the window and then leave the house. Mrs. Pace relieved the tension by saying: "I's afraid we ain't dressed stylish enough."

"I didn't know jes how to dress, ter tell you de truf!" exclaimed Mrs. Grundy, laughing and going to the tea table to look over it once again.

"I could 'a' put on my red dress, en I reckon I better 'a' done it," said Mrs. Ware, as she glanced in pride over her finery.

"You oughten ter say dress, say gown; dat's whut de swell white ladies says," announced Mrs. Pace, in a tone of superiority.

Harriet was standing in the middle of the room scanning each woman, still undecided whether or not to throw them out of the window, when her eye

caught Miss Marbury coming in. The women were startled by Miss Marbury's appearance, and huddled together without saying a word, while Miss Marbury was so astonished at their flashy clothes that for the moment she could not speak. Finally, recognizing Mrs. Ware, she advanced and said very cordially as she extended her hand: "Mrs. Ware, I believe? I am so glad to see you."

Mrs. Ware now boldly advanced and took the extended hand of Miss Marbury and said bumptiously: "This is Mis's Grundy, and this 'un Mis' Pace; deh's all friends of de Bishop."

Miss Marbury assured them of her delight in receiving them, and asked for the Bishop. Mrs. Ware explained that he was on his way.

CHAPTER XX

The Bishop now arrived and the women were all excitement. Each of the colored women desired to be specially noticed by him, so as to increase Miss Marbury's idea of her importance, but Mrs. Ware, the most forward of them, advanced to greet the Bishop, not waiting for Miss Marbury to do so. The greeting over, Miss Marbury turned to the women and suggested they go into her room and remove their wraps, and leading the way, they followed. At the door she stopped and told the Bishop to make himself at home until they returned. With much suavity of manner and profundity of voice he assured her that he would do so, even suggesting that he would help himself to tea in the meantime. But he had scarcely time to look around and smile at Miss Marbury's idea of having tea and cakes before the bell rang and Foster Peek was shown in. Foster was a tall, coarse, vulgar, black negro. He was hardly what old Dick would call a Guinea negro, yet that variety was no blacker than Peek. Brutality and licentiousness marked his countenance. Nature had written the fact in big letters so that all might have warning. His lips were big and heavy, while his skin seemed as if it might be an inch in thickness. His nose was flat and his chin stood out like a pestle from his heavy-set jaws, while his short forehead sloped back into his black, kinky hair. As could be seen, he was but slightly above a beast, yet

he had great cunning and much boldness. It was apparent that he had made some attempt to dress himself stylishly, yet his clothes were coarse and ill-fitting, besides, had seen much wear. Of the same race, yet the two men presented quite a contrast—the Bishop was an educated man, a mulatto, while Peek was an ignorant negro. He was, however, the political boss of the negroes of the community, and sold his influence to anyone who would buy. Convictions upon political issues was an unknown thing to him, yet he professed to be a Republican, and was so when delegates were to be elected to go to Presidential conventions and the like. The Bishop, also somewhat of a politician, resented Peek's influence, and never lost an opportunity to belittle him. So between the two men there was mistrust, hatred, and envy. The Bishop had not invited Peek to this meeting—in fact, he was the last man on earth this ecclesiastical satrap would have thought of asking. But Peek had heard of the meeting and decided to attend. Invitations were small matters to him, and the lack of them never kept him away from any place he wanted to go. The two men stood glaring at each other, until finally the Bishop demanded angrily: "What are you doing here?"

Peek stood for a time in silence, then smiling with contempt, replied: "I's here fur the same thing you is."

"But Miss Marbury didn't invite you, and I didn't; so you are, as the French say, *de trop*."

Peek smiled, not at the French word, the meaning of which he did not know, but at his own shrewdness

in having heard of this meeting and in daring to enter, and now responded tauntingly:

"I reckon you means fur me to git out; but, Bishop Gately, you don't know me if you thinks I a-gwine. I heerd of dis meetin' an' of de lady's intention to do sumpen to help the cullud race, an' I concluded to be present and represent my part of it—de blacks. I knowed you'd be here to stan' fur yo' gang o' mulelatters, an' here I's gwine ter stay."

For a moment the Bishop stood angrily looking at Peek. The Bishop liked peace and was for progress, and deemed men like Peek, who committed those atrocities upon the white women that led to lynchings, and at times to race riots, as unworthy of his countenance. It was these men, the Bishop knew, who kept not only the Southern people, but also those of other sections, from doing as much for the negro race as they otherwise might. Yet he did not dare openly accuse this element and support the law in hunting them down for their crimes, for this would bring on a war between the two divisions of the negro race. He loved power, and desired to have all negroes, good and bad alike, look to him for commands. He feared Peek's presence was going to lead to trouble for himself, for he knew his audacity. Miss Marbury had already expressed her views upon the solidarity of the negro race, and should Peek discover her sentiments upon this subject he would not fail to take advantage of it. Miss Marbury was to be cajoled and flattered and made to believe that she was doing a great work, but the Bishop was to be master. Realizing the danger of Peek's presence

and the futility of attempting to drive him out, he decided to make terms with him quickly before Miss Marbury should return.

While he stood considering what to offer Peek in way of spoils arising from the vast expenditure he understood Miss Marbury was going to make, Peek advanced to the tea table and, looking over it, smiled triumphantly; then, turning to the Bishop he asked in a sarcastic tone: "Is she gwine to have sumpen to eat for yo' crowd?"

"She expects to serve tea and cakes, I believe," replied the Bishop, with great dignity. Peek laughed and, advancing toward the Bishop, said defiantly: "You won't have it all to yo'se'f; I have invited some of my gang, and they'll be here."

"Who?" shot from the Bishop's fat lips like a ball from a cannon. Again Peek smiled triumphantly. "Tildy Jones, Vinie Beck, Susan Borders."

These were all black women and were cooks of white people. Tildy was a very brazen, ignorant, vulgar woman who was constantly in a broil with other negro women, and had been in police courts times almost without number. Harriet hated her more than she did Satan, and whenever she saw her was ready for a fight. Indeed, they had had several. At the suggestion of these names the Bishop became very indignant and advancing toward Peek, said gruffly:

"Peek, you are not invited here and you must get out; and you must also stop those women from coming. Go now and rely upon me to look after you in

the event Miss Marbury decides to spend any money for the elevation of our race."

"In response to this Peek chuckled and, picking up one of the delicate, china cups and looking at it curiously, said:

"Huc! you don't know me, Bishop, if you think you can run me. I's gwine ter stay here and drink whatever de white lady puts in dis, an' my frien's aire comin' too; an' den, I have sumpen to say to de white lady. An' mo', Bishop, I don't want any mo' of yo' little jobs. De lady has got to understand who is de cullud race. It ain't yo' mulelatters, nurr; hit's de blacks; an' I stan' fur dem. An' I's gwine ter see Mis' Marbury understands dis, an' if she's gwine ter spend any money, I'm gwine ter be her man, not you." Chuckling and smiling significantly, he continued: "I'll give you a little job, Bishop."

The wily prelate realized the danger he was in and quickly asked: "What do you want? Name it."

Peek saw the Bishop was frightened, and felt that he himself was now in command of the situation, and replied after chuckling and leering at his enemy: "I wants everything, an' I'm gwine ter have it."

"Peek," began the Bishop, in a conciliatory way, "if Miss Marbury gets the idea that there is any division within our race on the color line she will likely refuse to do anything; and as she represents millionaires from the North who are willing to spend any amount here for our benefit, you will throw the fat in the fire. Now, you go and leave the matter to me. I'll treat you right."

Peek was now more convinced than ever that he

had done right to come, and by staying would frustrate the Bishop, if he did not benefit himself. He made no response, but looked at the Bishop and smiled with contempt. The Bishop walked over and laid his hand upon Peek's shoulder, that he might talk confidentially, but the black leader did not care for this and shoved it off, and said gruffly:

"Stand whar you is, Bishop. If you got anything to say, say it, but you ain't gwine ter hunnyfugle me."

"Do you want to drive Miss Marbury from aiding our race?" demanded the Bishop sternly.

"If you mean yo' race, de mulelatters, who has been gittin' everything that the Northern people have sent here—yes, dat I do. I wants her to know de truf, an' I 'lows fur her to know it. De blacks is de real race, an' I gwine ter tell her so. An' mo', I gwine ter expose yo' whole set. How uppity you is, an' how you mulelatters tries to step on de blacks; stays wid yo'se'ves; has yo' own churches; an' it's gittin' so a mulelatter gal, not only won't marry a black man, but she'll hardly be caught goin' wid him. We ain't gwine ter stand fur dat no longer. I's gwine ter tell Miss Marbury so. Den if she's fur de mulelatters, I ain't in it; but if she's fur de blacks, as I think she'll be, then I'll be de man!"

The Bishop now felt the sand slipping from under his feet, for he knew Miss Marbury's ideas upon the subject, and realized that if Peek asserted what the conditions were that Miss Marbury would be likely to refuse to proceed with her plans, or would dismiss him and take Peek as her adviser. He disputed

the correctness of Peek's statement in regard to the division upon color lines. Peek laughed at this and exclaimed:

"Huc! What's the use in you denyin' it; you know it's so, an' have said so; an' you have said more'n dat. I have heerd you. You said at a meetin' 'roun' at Jim White's house dat de time wus a-comin' when de whites an' blacks would marry one another all over this country; an' dat it wus the only settlement o' the race question. You said you wus quietly doin' all you could fur it, but dat it had to be kept low. I 'members dat, an' you can't deny it." The Bishop shook his head, whereupon Peek continued: "Huc! You said all over de North niggers and white people were marryin', an' it was only a question of time when it would come down here. You said it had to come, an' I can prove you said it; an' I gwine ter tell her dat."

The Bishop had said this many times, for it was his opinion that miscegenation was the only solution of the negro problem. He thought it would be centuries coming, but it would finally come. He didn't talk this publicly, because he knew the whites of the South would not tolerate the suggestion even. Looking boldly at Peek the Bishop replied:

"What I have said at our meetings was meant for black ears only, and you have no right to repeat it. 'Then, too, no doubt, Miss Marbury shares the same opinion, as a great many people from her section do. So you will gain nothing by quoting me."

Peek leered at him with defiance overspreading his

big features, and asked: "Den why is you afraid fur me ter tell her?"

Their conversation was interrupted now by the entrance of Tildy Jones, Vinie Beck, and Susan Borders, led by Harriet, who without a word, but with every feature aflame with indignation, stalked into the middle of the room and stood glaring first at the Bishop and then at Peek. The three women stopped at the door, hesitating at the sight of the Bishop. Peek smiled and invited them in, and, looking at the Bishop, said confidently: "Here's my crowd, Bishop; and we have come to stay."

Tildy curtsied to the dignitary of Big Becky, and Vinie attempted to imitate her, but Vinie was old, and the cartlages of her knees were stiff, so it cannot be said that she did it gracefully. Susan simply ducked her head, and made no attempt to bend her knees. The Bishop, paying no attention to their greeting, stood looking at them in disgust. He had no sympathy with them. None!

They had attempted to dress befitting the great occasion, and if an old barnyard hen could borrow the tail of a peacock and place it in her own short appendage she could not look more incongruous than did these three black women with their various colors of ribbons, as well as gay hats and flounced skirts, the like of which Miss Marbury had never seen or ever expected to see.

As the Bishop stood looking at them the three mulatto women entered, Mrs. Ware first. She stopped suddenly at sight of these black women, and the disgust upon her face was so great that it ap-

peared fixed. The three black women became frightened and huddled together behind Foster Peek. Mrs. Ware advanced a few steps and beckoned the black women to retire. Harriet stood in the door of the hallway, as though blocking it, with arms folded. She was too outraged to see the humor of the situation and was too indignant to speak. Between the black women and the mulatto women she had no choice, hating both alike. The blacks were considered beneath her notice—they were not in her class as cooks, and the mulattoes, being more intelligent and holding themselves far above her, she hated. Thinking now they might go out and say that she had waited upon them in Miss Marbury's house was so humiliating to her pride that she was meditating walking from the house.

Miss Marbury now entered, and, not expecting to see Foster Peek and the black women, her astonishment was so great that she stopped at the door, and it was a moment or more before she regained command of herself and could enter. She thought that the mulatto women were ridiculously dressed, but when she looked upon the black women she could hardly realize that they were human beings. She had seen pictures in the comic papers of black women in evening gowns, and had laughed over it as about the most comical thing she had ever seen; but now to be confronted with the sight itself—she could hardly believe her own eyes. She was dumb; all were dumb. The black women trembled and the mulatto women felt humiliated. The Bishop was embarrassed and stood gazing at Miss Marbury. Peek

alone was complacent. To him there was nothing novel in the dress of his supporters, which he would have called beautiful, and as he looked at Miss Marbury a smile gathered upon those big fat lips. It was this that aroused her, and she now advanced toward the Bishop as she inquired: "Who is your friend? Please introduce me."

The Bishop stammered and for a moment hesitated what to do; finally he blurted out sullenly:

"Hem—er—Mr. Peek, Miss Marbury."

She advanced toward Peek with extended hand and said very cordially: "I am so glad to meet you, Mr. Peek."

Peek extended his big, rough, black hand and, taking Miss Marbury's into it, gave such a squeeze that she winced and withdrawing it quickly looked at the Bishop again and asked: "And your other friends, Bishop?"

Again he stammered and looking at Peek, indicated that he was to introduce his own crowd. Peek turned toward his supporters and, seizing Tildy Jones by the sleeve, he pulled her forward and said roughly: "Dis is Tildy Jones." Then grabbing Susan Borders by the arm he jerked her forward as he said: "Dis'n is Susan Borders." Vinie Beck in her fright retreated a few steps, but she could not escape the long reach of Foster Peek, who now seized her by the wrist and pulled her as a policeman would a criminal and exclaimed loudly: "An' dis un is Vinie Beck."

The three negro women were now in a row facing Miss Marbury. Tildy thought it was proper, as

she had made no remark to Miss Marbury, to make some show of cordiality, whereupon she curtsied very profoundly, and Vinie and Susan attempted to imitate.

Miss Marbury stood looking on at the performance, trying to suppress a smile; and to relieve the situation she gave a slight curtsey herself. The three mulatto women stood together at the left of the room looking on in disdain. The Bishop stood by himself near the middle of the room holding his hands, while his face betokened utter despondency. He felt like a criminal who had been convicted and was about to receive his sentence. Finally Miss Marbury said to the blacks:

"I am so glad to see you. It was good in you to come without having known me before, but the Bishop's word can bring anyone, I suppose."

As she said this she turned to the Bishop, but before that dignitary could say anything Tildy announced quickly: "De Bishop! why—it was Foster Peek that told us to come."

"Hem! Hem!" began the Bishop, stammering. "Yes; Mr. Peek brought them."

He tried to say this cheerfully and approvingly, but Miss Marbury noticed his discomfiture; and, turning to Peek, said very cordially: "Oh, Mr. Peek brought them! You must bring them again; and you must come yourself. Come now, let's have tea."

She advanced toward the table, and as she did she caught sight of Harriet's face, who all this while had stood by the door. It didn't take a second glance for Miss Marbury to discover Harriet's disgust.

She smiled and called her to assist. The black women waited for the mulattoes to advance, but as they stolidly remained in the corner behind the Bishop the situation became awkward. Miss Marbury smiled and said cordially:

"I am so delighted to see you all together, and so friendly. I had heard that there was some division among you on social lines, and I am so glad to see that you act together. Come up now and have tea."

She attributed the awkwardness of all to embarrassment, never for a moment suspecting what the real facts in the case were. All now advanced to the table, and she began to help them. Harriet had not moved from the door and again Miss Marbury summoned her. She slowly came forward.

"How many lumps, Bishop?" asked Miss Marbury very pleasantly.

"Four," responded the Bishop, as he advanced to take the tea.

"Dat's what I tecks!" exclaimed Tildy Jones as she moved toward the table.

"Huc! I tecks four, too!" shouted Vinie Beck, following Tildy. Mrs. Ware, with disgust upon her hard yellow face, stood back and was the last to be served.

Miss Marbury noticed this and, smiling very pleasantly, asked: "And you, Mrs. Ware?"

"Two," announced she almost angrily.

"Hand the cakes, Harriet," commanded Miss Marbury gently, as she looked at that faithful old woman standing near holding her hands behind her as though she didn't want them contaminated by the touch of

any of those present. Harriet took up the platter containing the cakes and thrust it in front of Mrs. Ware, as she exclaimed: "Want a cake?" Then moving to each of the others shoved the cakes in front of them, and merely grunted. Going near the blacks she placed the cakes down on the table in front of them and nodding her head as much as to say: "If you want cakes go and git 'em." Then she retired to the door, where she stood as one on guard. Miss Marbury advanced to the middle of the room, and holding the teacup in her hand as she slowly sipped, remarked:

"A little tea so relieves formality."

"Indeed it does; besides being a good thing," responded the Bishop pompously.

"I des dotes on tea!" exclaimed Tildy Jones, advancing to Miss Marbury's side and casting an eye at Mandy Ware. Mrs. Ware didn't respond further than to scowl at Tildy and shake her head. Vinie Beck remained at the tea table and helped herself to another cup, and not noticing that Miss Marbury had poured water from another vessel to weaken and cool the tea, she began to drink it. It was so hot that she shouted in pain: "Ouch! My tea's hot!"

All laughed as they looked around, and Vinie became very much embarrassed. Harriet's features relaxed somewhat at this, and going up to Vinie whispered: "You aire a fool; you never did have no sense."

Mrs. Ware now advanced to Miss Marbury, concluding she would take charge of the meeting and exclaimed airily: "Oh, Miss Marbury, it is such a

delight to be here wid you. You aire des a darlin', dat's what you is."

Miss Marbury smiled, and before she could reply Mrs. Grundy thought it her time to say something, and she advanced: "Dis is de dream o' my life—to be in a drawin' room and teck tea wid refined people."

The black women had congregated together again and Peek, noticing this, beckoned them to join him, and now he advanced, as he said with much gusto:

"Miss Marbury, I hear o' you being here, an' o' you havin' a meetin' to-day, an' I come of my own accord, as I stands fur de black race, an' I want to inshore you o' your cordial welcome here wid us."

The black women smiled and ducked their heads in approval of this. Again Mrs. Ware concluded to monopolize the conversation and opened her mouth to speak, but just what to say had not occurred to her when Tildy Jones interrupted: "Yes, indeed, Miss Marbury, we welcomes you wid open arms, and hopes you will have teas ebery day; I sho' will git off to come. Won't you, Susan, Vinie?"

"Umph, humph—won't I do?" responded Susan, while Mrs. Ware was so disgusted with this remark that she closed her lips and did not say what she had prepared. It was the Bishop now who concluded it was proper for him to say something in recognition of Miss Marbury's reception, and cleared his throat and opened his mouth, but was interrupted by Foster Peek.

"Aire you a-gwine ter buil' colleges an' hossitals here, Miss Marbury?"

"Oh, no," said she, "it is my purpose to aid the

colored race by other means. I wish to see you raised to a position equal to any others in intelligence and culture; and desire to erect an institution to aid my purpose. Let me get my statement, as I put it in writing. Please excuse me a moment." With this she left the room and Harriet followed her.

Quickly now the Bishop realized that he must act to conciliate all, or lose his control.

"Come," said he, "I want to speak to you all seriously.

Here, Brother Peek, listen to this; Miss Marbury has a great plan for uplifting our people."

"Mulelatters or blacks?" interrupted Tildy Jones.

"Wait, wait! Now hear me quietly," continued the Bishop. "Brer Peek and I have talked this matter over to some extent, and he is bound to agree with me that we must present a harmonious front in order to enlist Miss Marbury's sympathies. It is essential that we have no division between us on the color line, therefore we must agree to everything she has to say upon that subject, and act together. I will agree with Brer Peek that he shall be equal with me in all that's to be done; therefore there's no reason for a fight between us."

"Aire you gwine ter stand by that agreement?" asked Peek dubiously.

"Yes; all here are my witnesses, and, Brer Peek, you know that you can rely upon my word."

"Very well, Bishop, I'll trus' you; but the very minute you try to be the whole cheese I am gwine ter kick. Now all understand dat?"

"All right, Brer Peek; I'll tote fair."

Miss Marbury now entered with her statement and advanced into the middle of the room.

"It is my purpose," said she, "to make this statement very distinct, yet very short. I'll read it."

"Yes; do read it, darlin'!" exclaimed Mrs. Ware very affectionately.

Miss Marbury then began:

"Miss Marbury intends to erect an assembly hall in some appropriate locality in the city, which shall contain lecture-halls, reception-rooms, library, music-rooms, and space for such other departments as from time to time may be added. It being her intention to aid the negro race to acquire intelligence and refinement, but in no wise to further social equality between the white race and black races. Her main idea being to inspire a feeling of race pride among the negroes, and to instill a desire for solidarity of their race, feeling this is the true solution of the negro problem. Now, my friends, this is my purpose."

"No less than an inspiration!" exclaimed the Bishop ponderously.

"It do sho' sound good," said Vinie Beck, gleefully.

"Hem! I think hit's fine," announced Peek, smiling at the Bishop, and then at the women.

"I am so glad all like it," asserted Miss Marbury joyously. "Here are both blacks and mulattoes approving the solidarity of their race. It is truly inspiring; there is no great progress without that."

"When you gwine ter begin?" asked Peek very anxiously, as he approached near her and looked at

the paper which he could not read, without time to spell out the words.

"It will, of course, take some time to erect the hall after a suitable lot is secured; but if we can obtain a temporary hall I will begin at once."

"We can git it; I know the very place," shouted Peek, and then mentioned the hall he had in mind. For some time there was quite a discussion over Modac Hall, the place that Peek had mentioned; the Bishop, as he did not suggest it, opposed it. The women again separated, the blacks standing together on one side of Miss Marbury while the mulattoes stood on the other side. Miss Marbury and the two men continued discussing the size of the hall and price of the rent. She seemed pleased with Peek's description of the hall and was about to decide upon it when the Bishop exclaimed, in his endeavor to postpone matters:

"It will cost a pile of money to fix that hall as you want it." Miss Marbury was not deterred by this, and responded: "I guess it will cost no little to adapt any of them to our purpose."

"Dat it will," responded Peek, "an' den, too, deh ain't no udder hall that I knows of dat's suitable."

"Is it in a good locality?" inquired Miss Marbury, looking at Peek, who now seemed to be in command.

"Hit's near Big Becky—Bishop's church," answered Peek, smiling and looking at the Bishop.

"Then why isn't it the very place, Bishop?" demanded Miss Marbury, appealing to him.

The Bishop was well acquainted with the hall, and had he suggested it he would have argued for it as

a proper site, but inasmuch as Peek had done so he feared Miss Marbury would choose Peek to look after it and perhaps do the renting. This he was utterly opposed to. That was the privilege he desired.

"Hem! It may do; but before it's accepted I think I better go down with you, Miss Marbury, and look over it," said he, with much gravity.

"Dat's my job, Bishop, an' I'll go wid Miss Marbury. I found de hall."

Miss Marbury smiled at Peek and then at the Bishop; and in an endeavor to placate both, as she saw each was striving to be her master, said very pleasantly, but firmly: "If the hall is what Mr. Peek says it is, I will take it."

"It's des as I says it is; an' de Bishop knows it!" exclaimed Peek confidently.

"Very well, Mr. Peek, you see the agent and find out what we can get it for, and how long. We will certainly take it for six months and you had better get an option for twelve months."

The Bishop stood by grumly while Peek was jubilant.

"I think I shall need a business agent to aid me in such matters as this; now whom shall it be?" said Miss Marbury as she looked first at Peek and then at the Bishop. The mulatto women, at a wink from the Bishop, advanced to put in a word for him. Seeing this, Peek summoned, with a little nod of the head, his black women, who rushed up behind him from the tea table where they had been helping themselves again.

"I's de man fur you," exclaimed Peek, confident in his powers and triumphant over his success in locating the hall.

The Bishop smiled jocosely and looked at Miss Marbury as much as to say: "A man who proposes himself is hardly the fit man," and clearing his throat, said with dignity:

"That is a position involving no little time and responsibility; and maybe no appointments should be made at present. There are many fine business men among our race whom you have not met, and as we want to extend your influence it might be best to choose one of them."

Peek manifested his displeasure, and again announced he was a good business man; and would like to have the position. The Bishop continued to oppose, and as Miss Marbury turned toward the tea-table inviting all up to have tea again, Peek and the Bishop did not follow her, but stepped to one side and talked in low tones.

After a time they advanced and Miss Marbury asked: "Have you settled who is to be my agent?"

"Huc!" exclaimed Peek, "Bishop wants it, and so does I."

"Oh, the Bishop wants it? Well, how shall we settle it?"

"Let's vote fur 'em!" exclaimed Tildy Jones loudly.

"Very good, very good," replied Miss Marbury, "we will do that. Now all favoring Mr. Peek as agent say aye."

Tildy, Vinie and Susan said "aye" lustily.

"All favoring Bishop say aye,"

Mrs. Ware and Mrs. Grundy now voted for the Bishop, while Mrs. Pace did not seem inclined to vote. Her husband liked Peek.

"Mr. Peek has the majority," Miss Marbury announced, "and he's to be my agent. Turning to the Bishop she continued, smiling very cordially: "I think it's just as well, Bishop, to have Mr. Peek, as we will all confer over matters, and increase our numbers, as I shall want to enlist all in the cause."

The Bishop was very glum over his defeat and had nothing to say. Peek on the contrary was jubilant, and the black women clapped their hands.

Vinie Beck, now realizing that it was growing late, and that she should be tending to her duties as cook, exclaimed: "My goodness! I'm stayin' here too late! Mis' Ragan will be atter me, fur I oughter had dinner on half hour ago."

"So ought I," shouted Susan Borders, and both began to move around with anxiety.

Miss Marbury smiled and, not caring to detain them, but rather speed their parting, in a true hospitable way turned to them and said: "Very well, don't let me interfere with your duties. I'm so glad you came, and trust that you will come again."

Tildy Jones now rushed up and extending her hand gave it a vigorous shake, exclaiming: "I am so delighted to have been here; an' I sho' am comin' agin. When aire you gwine ter give anuder tea?"

Miss Marbury smiled as she said she did not know, but would appraise them in due time.

Vinie Beck now advanced with extended hand and

said gleefully: "Good-by, Miss Marbury. I's sho' enjoyed myse'f pow'ful; dat I did, an' I'm comin' again sho'!"

"She tuck de words out'n my mouf. I wus jes gwine ter say dem very words, honey. I sho wus!" exclaimed Susan Borders, as she extended her big hand. The three black women now arranged themselves in a row and gave a curtsy, and turning rushed from the room.

Mrs. Ware stood looking on with disdain, and now advanced to Miss Marbury and said in a whisper, as she didn't want the Bishop to hear her:

"Dat gang aint our set, an' I's pow'ful sorry deh come. Deh aint nobody, deh's cooks, an' Fos Peek had no right to fetch 'em here. Honey, don't you let yo'self get mixed up wid any sich crowd."

Miss Marbury hardly knew what to reply to this; in fact, the occasion hadn't been just what she had expected, and how she would act in the future she had not determined. While her statement had said that she did not intend to foster social equality between the races, it was evident to her that the women looked upon her as an advance agent on the lines of social equality. How to disabuse their minds of that fact she was not prepared to say, but she was fully determined that they should know it, and more, that they should act upon it. But at present she chose to say nothing and, smiling upon Mrs. Ware, replied: "Oh, well, they must be looked after."

Mrs. Ware determined to show some affection to Miss Marbury, and thus ingratiate herself forever, perhaps, become her sponsor in the community among

the aristocratic mulattoes, and stepping up suddenly she seized her in her arms as she exclaimed:

"Oh, you darlin'! You darlin'! I des loves you already," and puckered her lips for a kiss, but Miss Marbury was struggling to free herself, and turned her face away. She was angry, but restrained herself, and said with dignity:

"I am not accustomed to such affection, Mrs. Ware, and really——"

"But before she could finish her remark Mrs. Ware, who was afraid she was going to receive a lecture, and not desiring to get it, raised both hands and laughing loudly said: "I des loves you, and wants you to know it."

Miss Marbury replied lightly: "Oh, that's all right," and casting her eyes around saw the outraged look upon Harriet's face, who had returned from the door to dismiss the black women. Miss Marbury really felt like Harriet about the matter, but did not want to express it so freely. When the mulatto women had gone out Miss Marbury turned to the two men, who were standing by themselves growling. The Bishop was not satisfied, and was attempting to have Peek give up the new agency that had just been conferred upon him. Walking up to them Miss Marbury inquired what was the monthly rental of the hall. Peek answered quickly that it would be a hundred dollars a month. At once the Bishop objected, and for a time the colloquy between them was heated, as the Bishop insisted that seventy dollars a month would be a good price for it. Peek, however, argued

that it had always rented for a hundred, and the agent told him it was a hundred.

Miss Marbury went to her desk, wrote out a check for six hundred dollars, and as she handed it to Peek said: "Take the hall for six months with the option for six additional months."

The Bishop intervened and attempted to take the check, but Miss Marbury was displeased with the Bishop's conduct, and very quietly handed it to Peek. But the Bishop was still not content, and suggested that he take the check and collect it. Peek laughed and responded that he could collect the check as well as the Bishop, besides there would be no collection, as he would turn the check over to the real estate agent in charge of the hall; however, the Bishop was not going to have it this way, and continued to make excuses for delaying.

"The matter is settled!" exclaimed Miss Marbury, with promptness, "and you will so understand it, Bishop."

"There is one thing in connection with the Modac hall I would like to suggest," said he humbly.

"What is that?" asked Miss Marbury, in a tone of surprise.

"The people of that neighborhood may object to its use by us, for there are some white people living near there who object to us having churches near them, claiming that we disturb them at night with our protracted meetings and the like."

But Peek informed her that these white people lived at some distance from the hall, and had never objected to its use by the blacks; and that it was

principally in a negro settlement. For a moment Miss Marbury stood thinking over the situation. It was something new to her to hear of the objection by the whites to negro churches, and she could not fully comprehend it, as she did not know of the tremendous noises produced at the protracted meetings of the negroes, nor how long they continued into night, as well as the disturbance many of them made in coming away, singing songs and shouting in their religious fervor.

"Mr. Peek," began Miss Marbury, "I do not want to rent that hall if it's to create any disturbance with the white people of that section. I wish you to take this document and show it to the renting agent, that he may understand the use for which the hall is intended. If there is any opposition our skirts will be clear, and he will be the man to blame."

Peek rather objected to this, as he thought it might raise the price of the rent; but Miss Marbury was insistent and continued further, as she gave him the document:

"When it comes to purchasing a site for our hall the purpose for which it is to be erected must be thoroughly understood in the community, for I am not here to raise antagonisms—on the contrary, to settle them."

Peek shook his head at this, as he thought prices would go up on rents as well as lots when the object was known for which the hall or lot was intended. But she was obdurate. The business being over, the two men departed. As Harriet came back from the door she stood looking at Miss Marbury with aston-

ishment upon every feature of her face. Miss Marbury smiled and said: "They are a little peculiar, aren't they?"

Grumly Harriet responded: "Huc! I reckon deh is, an' Mis' Mat, you gwine ter git in trouble."

CHAPTER XXI

Miss Marbury sat for a long time reflecting over the incidents of the day, and while she was proud of the fact that she had begun upon her plan, she felt anything but confidence in the ability and character of those upon whom she was to rely to aid in its execution. She did not want to think that her first meeting had been a mistake in the personnel of those invited, or in her endeavor to relieve any formality by serving tea and cakes. She was sure this feature had led the women into thinking that her object, notwithstanding her disavowal of it, was to promote social equality. Her associations had always been with those of her own kind and class, where it was very easy for one's manners to mark the line beyond which others were not to go; but her manner with the negro women had signified nothing to them. After supper she went out upon the front porch and took a seat in a large rocking chair and looked out upon the moonlit lawn. While it was the latter part of October, the air was still balmy. For a time she looked upon the new moon that hung like a scimeter in the sky, and recalled the night at Saratoga when she confessed to Andy that she cared more for him than any man she had ever met. As she recalled that event, and the happy days and evenings that she spent there, she grew very sad and reflective; and when she thought of his return and the scene that would follow her heart smote her, and .

she asked herself the question: "Is it all over?" Upon this she continued to reflect, and to weigh what she had done, and what she intended to do to see whether or not he would be justified in terminating the relations that existed between them. In the enthusiasm of her first convictions of duty to the negro race she had felt that she could give him up, and would do so if he disapproved of her conduct; but to-night in her loneliness, and in the awakening brought about by her very first meeting with the negroes, she was not quite sure that she could give him up so easily. This brought up her course. "Can it be that I am wrong?" whispered she half audibly, and then sat for a time weighing the question.

"I am not wrong! I am not wrong!" exclaimed she finally. "My purpose is good, and my plan can accomplish great things; and I must pursue it!" This exclamation was somewhat like a safety valve and for a time she felt easy, but again came the whispering of love and a vague feeling that she had forever alienated Andy. Dorothy, she thought, would now never give her consent, and Andy's friends would deride him for marrying a woman who had gone counter to their established views upon the negro question—a matter they considered so vital to their existence as a people that opposition in opinion, much less overt acts, was deemed worse than criminal conduct. Not a friend in over a thousand miles of her, and embarking upon an unknown sea, and in a craft never sailed in before, she keenly realized how helpless she was. But like her old Puritan ancestors, who had not consulted their chances of

life, but boldly sailed forth to make their own way or perish, she felt a sustaining hand in her convictions of right, and would continue her course, hoping to the last that all would come right. "If he loves me he will not give me up for what I am doing, but wait in patience," mumbled she to herself as she rose and walked up and down the porch. "I am to struggle, and no one knows how hard it is going to be. He, too, must suffer and show the world that he can resist the ridicule of those who misunderstood me," announced she so loudly, that Harriet, who sat in the kitchen, heard her and came to the door to see who had come. She had moved along so quietly in her old carpet slippers that Miss Marbury had not heard her approach. Harriet could see no one, and feeling that some one had come and had been driven away she advanced across the porch to the front steps and looked out as she said: "I thought I heerd you talkin' to somebody."

Miss Marbury laughed nervously as she replied: "No, Aunt Harriet, I was just musing to myself and spoke aloud. No one has been here."

Harriet grunted as she turned around and went back in the house. Returning to the door she said: "Mis' Mat, I gwine ter bed, kase I's tired. You aint said whether or not you wants me to sleep upstairs in the room nex' to you so that if you needs me I'll be right dar."

It hadn't occurred to Miss Marbury that Harriet best sleep in the house instead of in the servant's room in the back yard, but this suggestion met with her approval, and she replied cheerly:

"I am glad you thought of it; sleep upstairs, we'll be company for each other. You go to bed, and I myself will come up in a very few minutes, for I am tired."

"Very well, I'll see dat all de winders aire fastened down an' lock de back do' an' all; so you'll have nothin' to do when you come in but to lock de front do', an' put out de lights."

After old Harriet had gone Miss Marbury continued pacing the porch for some time feeling more and more lonely. She reasoned, however, that she would soon become accustomed to this mode of living, and it wouldn't seem so forlorn and cheerless.

The next morning early she was awakened by a mocking-bird singing in a tree-top near the window. She had been told that the male would sing all the time his mate sat upon her nest—it was his part in the family forming. "Am I giving up all in life worth the living for to elevate the negro?" sadly mused she. Harriet now came to tell her that breakfast would soon be ready. She arose and dressed herself slowly, for her mind was upon Andy.

Early in the day visitors began to arrive, for Tildy, Vinie, and Susan had gleefully told of the meeting they had attended, of the tea and cakes; and completely misunderstanding Miss Marbury's mission, spread the idea that she was keeping open house to all who chose to come. Miss Marbury was astonished, and didn't understand how to account for it, and for a time stood and received as though she were giving a reception. She wanted to know colored people, wanted to see them and talk to them; but she

was not prepared for this unexpected way of doing so. Then, too, this was not the way she had planned, and became a little weary of the eagerness of the crowd, particularly as most of them, she perceived, were an idle, shiftless set coming from curiosity. A lull finally came in the flow of visitors, and Miss Marbury instructed Harriet to allow no more to enter. More than ever now she realized the magnitude of her undertaking, and quailed as she saw the attitude she must necessarily be placed in—misunderstood by the black people, who thought she came as one teaching social equality between the races, and likewise misunderstood by the whites, who would take the same view.

As she sat in the library she could hear the responses made by those who were turned away. Some were merry, while others were indignant over their disappointment. The seriousness of the situation seized her as she pondered over the fact that all who had been allowed to come in would spread the news of their calling. To close her doors against all would create feeling against her, but to receive them as she had done the first part of the morning would be foreign to her ideas, and place her in a false light with both black and white. Certainly it would make it impossible for Andy to forgive her. As it was, she knew he was going to be very angry, and maybe refuse to listen to any explanation.

Now she had another caller, Mrs. Ware, whom Harriet admitted, as she supposed Miss Marbury wanted to see her. Miss Marbury arose at sight of her, determined by her frigidity of manner to check

all demonstration as had been made on the day before by this coarse woman. Mrs. Ware, however, failed to notice this reserve of manner and dashed toward her with arms extended exclaiming: "Oh, you darlin'!"

"Miss Marbury in a very haughty manner stepped back, raised her hands and said with composure: "Pardon me, Mrs. Ware, I am not accustomed to such greeting and don't care for it."

Mrs. Ware stopped suddenly, and anger mounted her big coarse face.

"Mrs. Ware," continued Miss Marbury, in a tone of severity, "I thought I made myself understood yesterday, that I am not here to inculcate the idea of social equality between the whites and blacks. Indeed, I am opposed to that. I have explained that it is my intention to elevate your race, make it satisfied with itself, and not aspire to social equality with the whites."

"Mrs. Ware stood in amazement, then finally in her rage she shouted:

"Den whut you mean by havin' a nasty, dirty gang o' niggers runnin' in here all mornin'? Does you mean that you's fur dem black niggers, an' agin my color? Is dat it?"

Miss Marbury smiled and said very calmly:

"No; not at all. Those people called this morning under a misunderstanding; but I hope all of you will understand me; and there will be no friction."

Mrs. Ware had not comprehended Miss Marbury's meaning and stood looking at her for some time, and then thinking she would be conciliatory and win her

way, her big lips parted in a smile and she gave a curtsy as she said:

"Oh, I understand yer, course I does; we'll git along all right; dat we will. Dem nigger women dat Fos Peek fotch in here have gone and blabbed to everybody deh's seed. You caint have nothin' to do wid sich as deh is. You mus' run wid our set. We's de swells, an' I come by ter git you to go wid me to the Ladies' Huxillary 'Ciety of Mount Horeb Church. Deh's lookin' fur you; I tol' 'em I'd fetch you."

"Mount Horeb Church? Where is that?" asked Miss Marbury, in some surprise.

"Oh, dat's whar you come las' Sunday," said Mrs. Ware. "Don't you remember?"

"Why, I thought that was Big Becky!" exclaimed Miss Marbury, not understanding.

"Huc! Dat's whut de niggers calls it; but we calls it Mount Horeb Church."

"Niggers!" exclaimed Miss Marbury sharply. "Whom do you call niggers? Aren't you a negro?"

"Me! Me a nigger! No, indeed. Hoo! I am a light complected cullud lady," replied Mrs. Ware, as she switched around the room with lifted chin and ridiculous swagger.

Miss Marbury could hardly repress a smile as she looked upon this new species of being, and then asked: "What do the blacks call themselves?"

With great contempt Mrs. Ware turned and replied: "Cullud persons."

"Is there antagonism between you two?"

"Antag'nism? You mean do we run together?" exclaimed Mrs. Ware, not quite understanding.

"Yes; that's what I mean," replied Miss Marbury, suppressing her amusement at the ignorance and bumptiousness of Mrs. Ware.

"Hoo, hoo!" shouted Mrs. Ware in contempt. "I should say we don't run together."

"You belong to the same churches, do you not?"

"Niggers jine Mount Horeb! Hoo! hoo!" shouted Mrs. Ware, as though such a thing was utterly preposterous.

Miss Marbury was astonished, and for a moment was silent, then said seriously: "Why, you can't be in earnest about that. You would not exclude negroes from Mount Horeb because of color?"

"You don't understand," replied Mrs. Ware, smiling superciliously. "We light complected cullud persons aire jes as proud of our skin as you white folkes is, an' we don't no more associate wid niggers den you do. Dat we don't!"

"But that feeling is not general, Mrs. Ware; it's confined to a very small set, I imagine."

In response to this Mrs. Ware gave a whoop, followed with a boisterous laugh, and then exclaimed:

"Why honey, yo' doan know nothin'! You des wait an' see fur yo'se'f. You won't have nothin' to do wid niggers; deh's a dirty, filthy set. But we light complected cullud persons is got refinement an' intelligence, an' we's de crowd you gwine ter go wid. Now you come on an' git in my buggy—it's bein' helt by a little nigger boy—an' go wid me to our 'ciety. I's Madam President of de 'ciety."

Miss Marbury was perplexed, and looking at Mrs.

Ware asked: "Mrs. Ware, the light complected marry negroes, do they not?"

Again there was a hoot, followed by a laugh of ridicule. "Er self respectin' light complected cullud gal marry a black nigger? Hoo! Why, she des soon think of marryin' a hoss!" shouted Mrs. Ware, as she laughed.

This was a new phase of matters Miss Marbury had not been appraised of, except by suggestions made by both the Major and Andy; but she had not believed it. And she could not yet realize that it could be true.

"Does Bishop Gately entertain those views you have expressed about the negro?" now asked she, looking at Mrs. Ware.

"Course he do, but doan you say nothin' to him about what I sez, fur he don't want us to talk to you about dis." Laughing, she continued: "He tol' us that you had notions about the solridarity of the negro race that was foolish, but we musn't let on. You aint gwine ter tell him what I said now?"

Miss Marbury hesitated a moment and then replied: "No; I will not tell him if you wish me not to; but why should he try to mislead me? I am here to uplift the entire race, and want to know all the facts."

Mrs. Ware raised her hairless eyebrows and squinted those eyes mixed with yellow and a faded blue, producing a color as yet unknown, and then replied:

"I doan know. He axed us to lay low 'bout dis matter, dat's all I know."

Miss Marbury finally took a seat, as up to this time she hadn't wanted to invite Mrs. Ware to be seated, but tired, she could stand no longer. Mrs. Ware, however, didn't take a seat. Her limbs knew no weariness.

"Honey," continued Mrs. Ware, "de Bishop is a fine man, o' course; but you want's to know my husband, Mose Ware, who's de cheerman of de boa'd of trustees of Mount Horeb. He's a business man, an' you'd like to talk wid him. I'll fetch him up here to see you Sunday—dat's de only day he ken git off."

"What's his business?" asked Miss Marbury at random, for her mind was reflecting upon the situation of the negro problem as it was now defined by Mrs. Ware.

"He's a drayman," responded Mrs. Ware, with some gusto.

For lack of anything to say and not desiring to tell Mrs. Ware that she didn't wish to meet her husband, Miss Marbury asked: "What do you do toward helping him make a living?"

"Me! Me work! Hoo!" shouted she with derision, "I don't do nothin'. I's a lady, I is."

"Everyone should work; it is a sin to be idle," replied Miss Marbury quietly.

Mrs. Ware gave no heed to this expression of opinion, but approaching Miss Marbury now urged that she go and get in her buggy and go to the meet-

ing of the women at Mount Horeb Church. Miss Marbury had no idea of going, yet she hardly knew how to excuse herself, as she didn't care to offend this woman. The idea of driving down Peachtree in a buggy with Mrs. Ware made a picture over which she smiled, as she thought of Andy, the Major, and Dorothy, as well as her Boston friends. Riding down Peachtree with this woman dressed in all the colors of Maypole!

Mrs. Ware now exclaimed suddenly, as though she was about to forget it.

"Oh, honey, I'm gwine ter have a tea Sat'day evenin' fur our set, an' you must be certain to come. I'll come fur you in my buggy."

Miss Marbury arose now, determined once for all to let Mrs. Ware understand her. With dignity, and in a tone of severity, she explained:

"Mrs. Ware, as I said before, I am totally misunderstood by you people. I did not intend my business meeting of yesterday to be construed as a social reception. I do not intend to give any social functions; and I do not expect to receive any. Please remember that; and I hope you thoroughly understand it."

Mrs. Ware stood glaring at her for a moment and, then asked querulously: "You's not comin' to my house?"

"No; not going there or elsewhere!" replied Miss Marbury composedly.

"You aint gwine wid me to the 'ciety meetin'?"

shouted Mrs. Ware, striding over toward Miss Marbury in a hostile manner.

"No; I'm not going—not to-day."

"Is you 'shamed to be seed ridin' in my buggy wid me?" exclaimed Mrs. Ware angrily, brandishing her arms as she would a bolo.

"That is not the reason I decline to go with you this morning. Now, I hope you will understand, and we will have no further words," said Miss Marbury, with dignity. For a moment Mrs. Ware glared over her from head to foot. She was angry, and might become violent.

"Humph! Den you feel above us, does you?" finally exclaimed she, with great contempt, brandishing her arms again.

Miss Marbury stood quietly looking at her with a smile upon her lips, which added to Mrs. Ware's anger; and she now switched around facing Miss Marbury exclaiming: "Bah! bah! I sees what you is; you's nobody! I knowed it all along! De white people here wouldn't wipe dere feet on you, an' as fur us, you ken des go!" Concluding her denunciation she pushed her heavy chin into the air and stalked from the room. She passed Harriet, who had stood in the hallway listening, ready to enter at the first sign of the row, which she had expected. Mrs. Ware was afraid of Harriet, as were all the other negroes, for Harriet was a tigress. The old woman opened the door and without a word Mrs. Ware passed out. Harriet now returned to the room and saw Miss Marbury sitting in a chair looking dejectedly upon the floor.

"Mis' Mat!" exclaimed she earnestly, "doan you let whut dat hussy say hurt yo' feelin's; she's a bad egg." Miss Marbury looked up and smiled upon her faithful bodyguard. "I tol' yo' yo' wus gwine ter git in trouble; an' you' sho is!"

"I hope not, Aunt Harriet," responded Miss Marbury sadly, as she turned away to look out of the window.

CHAPTER XXII

Miss Marbury, after Harriet left the room, sat motionless, in deep reflection upon the incidents of that day. Negroes had come in droves to see her. She realized they misunderstood her, and she had a vague suspicion that she misunderstood them; yet she would never confess this even to herself. Everything she had seen of them impressed her with the fact that something should be done to ameliorate the condition of these poor creatures, who seemed so hungry for the sympathy of the whites. The mulattoes, too, seemed so different from the blacks; while they were more intelligent, they appeared to be lacking in delicacy, presuming upon their color to be familiar. A smile crossed her face as she recalled Mrs. Ware flirting out of the room in high dudgeon because she had been refused social equality.

"I wish the whites here were not so prejudiced that I could confer with them—it would aid me so; and I could enjoy narrating the funny scenes; but it is useless to appeal to any of them, even to Andy. Their views are fixed, and so intolerant are they, that I can't even speak of what I am doing. Oh, how I wish Andy were different in this respect and could join me in this work! He will return to-morrow or next day, and then—what?" She arose now and paced the room as she reflected over what he would say, what he would do. She stopped as she heard the front door bell ring, and listened to the thump-

ing sound of Harriet's feet as she advanced. Peering in with a face of anxiety, Harriet whispered: "Hit's Fos Peek. Mus' I let him in?"

Miss Marbury nodded and stood waiting the entrance of this "image of God in ebony." He appeared at the door much changed in dress, for to-day he had on a long frock coat, very light trousers, flaming red tie, and new patent leather shoes. Miss Marbury invited him in, but did not extend her hand, for she intended to let him also understand the relation between them was strictly business, in which hand shaking and the like were not to be considered. He, however, did not observe the little coolness of manner and advanced with extended hand and parted lips. Miss Marbury turned to a chair and pointed to one for him, quietly ignoring his attempt to be cordial.

Harriet stood in the door looking on, and now exclaimed significantly: "Humph! You aire mighty dressed up all o' sudden." Peek turned and looked at her and laughed, but made no reply. Harriet closed the door, then in a moment opened it and left it ajar.

Miss Marbury did not see this little act of watchfulness, but Foster Peek did; and scowled as he looked through the door. Taking a seat he glanced at Miss Marbury and smiled triumphantly as he said: "Well, mum, I got de hall."

"Oh, you did?" said Miss Marbury agreeably.

"Yas 'um; it's our'n for six months at a hundred dollars a month. And an option for six months mo'; an' I found a lot to build our 'stution on, too."

"I see you are a business man, Mr. Peek."

"Yas, 'um, dat I is! De Bishop aint in my class for bus'ness. I foun' de best lot in de city, an' I tol' 'em we'd take it."

"I didn't authorize you to go that far, Mr. Peek."

"No, mum; but I knowed you'd want dis lot; so I took it."

"I shall not confirm your trade until I see the lot and all others that may be offered. Then, too, I shall consult the Bishop about it."

At once Peek became sullen at this suggestion of consulting the Bishop, and exclaimed with some anger: "De Bishop! Humph! I thought you was a-gwine ter stand by me and my color, and not by de Bishop and de mulelatters."

Miss Marbury remained quiet for a little while reflecting upon the suggestion of the color line, and finally asked: "Are you so divided between yourselves?"

"Is we?" exclaimed Peek earnestly, "I reckons we is, an' it's a gittin' wose an' wose. De mulelatters goes to deh own churches an' de blacks aint allowed to jine 'em."

Miss Marbury now concluded to question him respecting the social relations between the blacks and mulattoes, and for some time she quietly did it, taking the remarks of Mrs. Ware as the basis of inquiry. Peek upheld Mrs. Ware fully and convinced Miss Marbury that the mulattoes did hold themselves far superior to the blacks, and that the feeling was intensifying. She also questioned him respecting the Bishop's views upon that subject, and

Peek, desiring to gain her support for himself, ignored the agreement the Bishop had induced him to make with him regarding silence upon this subject, and now very fully repeated what the Bishop had said in that very room the day before. This talk, with what Mrs. Ware had previously said, made Miss Marbury very reflective. She resented the Bishop's duplicity, and was at a loss to know what course to pursue regarding it. As she sat thinking over this, Peek changed the subject, thinking the time was ripe to argue for himself, and began:

"You can rely on me, Miss Marbury; I'll do what's right. I'll buy de lot and look atter be buildin' of de 'stution; make all de contracts, so you won't have to do a thing."

"But I prefer to do something. In fact, I intend to look after every detail myself," said she.

Peek laughed lightly, and looking at her very significantly continued: "But you don't understand." Then hesitating a moment, he stammered: "Er—you's got no money, is you? You's a school-marm?"

Miss Marbury hardly understood what he meant, and, looking at him in a perplexed way for a moment, finally replied: "Why, I might be called a schoolmarm, yes."

"I thought dat," said he, smiling. "Now, Miss Marbury," continued he, moving his chair nearer hers, "I can work it so we can save a lot of money."

Miss Marbury began to feel ill at ease and shoved her chair back a trifle, and, straightening up, looked at him and said curtly: "Save a lot of money?"

"Dat's hit!" replied he eagerly; "I knows jes how to do it."

"Of course I want to save all the money I can in the matter of building, to use for other purposes," replied she, still in doubt as to his meaning.

"Certainly, certainly, you does; and I ken do it," responded he laughing in an insinuating way.

Miss Marbury was annoyed and her manner indicated it; but Peek seemed to pay no attention whatever to this.

"Hit's dis way," continued he, clearing his throat. "You see, I am a-gwine ter superinten' de build-in'——"

Miss Marbury interrupted quickly: "No; I am going to give this matter my personal attention."

"Of course, certainly." Peek smiled confidently and continued: "But you see—hem! Don't you see what I mean?"

"No; I fail to comprehend you," responded she very sternly.

Peek continued smiling, apparently confident of his success, notwithstanding her manner.

"I's had 'sperience; I know's jes how to do it. Hit's dis way: in spendin' dat money deh 'll be a lot o' pickin's."

"Pickings! pickings! What do you mean?"

Peek laughed and again moved his chair a little nearer and continued boldly: "Oh, dere'll be pickin's, all right. Dere al'ays is."

"You mean commissions?" asked she, in surprise.

"Yas'um, dat's hit; an' deh'll amount to a lot."

"There will be no commissions, Mr. Peek, for I intend to look after everything myself."

"Umph, umph! Doan you believe dar won't be any pickin's!" exclaimed he, laughing as though he were greatly amused.

"But I shall see to it that there aren't any," announced she with decision.

"You doan understand; you's a woman. You see, I'll take charge of de buildin', an' I ken do de pickin's; and you'll not know nothin' about it. Den when de time comes, money all spent, I'll be ready."

With a little alarm in her voice, Miss Marbury exclaimed: "Ready! Ready for what?" and moving her chair, indicated that she was about to rise.

Peek raised his hands as a protest and as a summons for silence, continued softly: "You don't ketch; hit's dis way: I'll have all de pickin's an' we'll have all de money we needs; an' den we needn't stay here where we'd be pestered by de white folks."

Miss Marbury arose quickly, showing that she was very angry. Peek also arose and said hurriedly as in explanation:

"Come, you don't understand! I'll have de money an' we can light out fur de Norf, where de nigger stands all right."

Miss Marbury's lips became compressed and her eyes flashed in anger as she said in a tone of command: "I think I understand you, and you must understand me. You must go, and go at once!" She pointed toward the door and stood glaring at him with all the fury of her being. Peek was perplexed, and looked toward the door wondering if Harriet

had heard him; and, then turning, glanced at Miss Marbury, who stood rigidly, with eyes riveted upon him. He still did not think he had lost, but that she was merely playing a part, and now in a wheedling tone he began:

"Come, don't git mad; I des sayin' how it could be done; an' 'lowed you'd be willin' to git your part of de pickin's."

"Go, I say," commanded she, motioning him toward the door.

Peek laughed, and said humorously: "Sholy—er—I er—you don't understand me."

"But I do understand you, and you will go at once. Do you hear me?"

Peek laughed, but didn't move.

"Go, I say!" shouted she. There was no fear in her voice, but on the contrary it was that of leader of a host advancing to battle. Again Peek looked at the door and then again at her, and stood in doubt. Again Miss Marbury pointed to the door and commanded: "Go!"

Slowly Peek turned and took a few steps, and then looked around grinning, and said humbly enough: "You des misunderstood me."

Miss Marbury now perceived Harriet for the first time, who stood just behind the door, and their eyes meeting, Harriet advanced, and with arms akimbo stood glaring at Peek, who looked at her and tried to appear at ease; but he was anything but satisfied with the situation. Not that he feared Harriet, but

Harriet had a tongue and could report upon him, even if Miss Marbury did not care to. He became a little alarmed and said apologetically: "I wus des misunderstood. Good-bye, Miss Marbury, I'll drop in agin an' splain to you."

Harriet threw the door open with her left hand and, advancing, pointed the right to Peek and in a shrill angry voice exclaimed: "Come wid me!" and as she attempted to seize him by the lapel of the coat he brushed her hand away and moved through the door. Harriet followed closely.

For a moment Miss Marbury stood listening to them as they went down the hall, and as she heard the door close on Peek she dropped into a chair exhausted by the nervous shock. Harriet returned and stood looking at her, her manner saying: "Now what do you think of it all?" Miss Marbury glanced up, and then away. For a moment silence reigned supreme.

"I tol' yer yer gwine ter git in trouble," said old Harriet hoarsely. Miss Marbury made no reply, and Harriet continued: "If any mo' niggers come must I let 'em in?"

Miss Marbury did not reply at once, for she was so astonished at everything that occurred that day that she was in doubt what to do. She did not want to see any more of them, yet did not intend to allow her purpose to be thwarted by any unexpected scenes or by the conduct of a few people, white or black. Her convictions were too deeply rooted for that.

"Give up! Give up! No! no!" thundered in every

cell of her mind, and looking at Harriet she smiled and said: "It depends upon whom they are. Attend the door and report to me before letting anyone in." Then as if suddenly changing her opinion she continued, "the Bishop. I'll see the Bishop—he only."

CHAPTER XXIII

Miss Marbury retired to her room and sat looking out of the window at those passing, they looked so free of care that she involuntarily compared herself with them. They were proceeding the usual tenor of their way, not disturbed by great thoughts of reforming millions of people. They were contented and happy, while she, attempting to do something for the benefit of others, was miserable—had been insulted.

“Is this the price one pays for striving to do something worthy of living, something not connected with self-interest, but for the public good?” At this moment seeing Mrs. Sims and Dorothy slowly driving by in the victoria she drew back from the window, and then felt ashamed of herself for this show of cowardice. She saw Dorothy cast a contemptuous glance toward the house, then, tossing her head, say something to Mrs. Sims. Miss Marbury felt that the remark was about her, and surmised that the stream of negroes that had been coming in all day had been witnessed by Dorothy’s critical eyes. She could hardly refrain from shuddering.

“Of course,” mused she, “it will be misunderstood; all will say I invited them, and that I am striving to bring about social equality between the races.” Rising to her feet she paced up and down the room for a time, and finally exclaimed in anguish: “Why did I allow them to come here! It is no part of my

plan to have such scenes; they can do no good, but much harm. I should have been stronger and declined to have seen them!" Pacing to and fro for a time she finally dropped down in a chair and in a note of sadness said aloud: "Andy will hear of it all before he sees me, and will also misunderstand it; no explanation will be satisfactory." She reflected a moment over this phase of it and again said aloud: "It was a mistake; one that I shouldn't have permitted. It will require months to undo it; and likely it never can be done completely."

Harriet now entered and handed her a telegram from Andy. At the sight of the name she gave a start and sat for a moment without reading it. Harriet noticed her perturbation and slowly retired.

"Andy Andy! Andy!" exclaimed she sadly, "what will you think? What will you do? I can never explain it." She now glanced over the telegram, which merely said that he had entered into the trial of his case and did not know when he would return. She now noticed the date; it had been sent the day before, and had evidently gone to the Major's and then come to her. Suddenly thinking of the Peek incident along with Andy, she sprang up and paced the floor. "Oh, that brute!" exclaimed she. "That is one thing Andy must not hear of," and stepping to the door she called Harriet and said: "Aunt Harriet, of course what happens here is not to be repeated to anyone, particularly anything you may have heard that man Peek say, if you heard anything at all."

Harriet nodded her head and replied: "You doan

have ter tell me nothin'." Drawing a razor from her shoe she brandished it savagely and continued: "You see dis! Ef he eber comes here again I specks to use it! It'll cut his tho'at from year to year."

"No, Aunt Harriet, there will be no occasion for that; he's not likely to come any more; but if he does you are not to let him in."

"Let him in!" exclaimed Harriet. Huc! I doan reckon I will; but if he rushes by me he'll hear from me. Dat's all."

"And you remember, Aunt Harriet, not one word about him to a soul."

Harriet stood for a moment as if hesitating, then looking at Miss Marbury with those little eyes of hers half closed, she said very decidedly: "Mis' Mat, I tol' you you gwine ter git in trouble, and you is. You can't 'low de gang dat's been comin' here to come no mo'. Hit's all wrong; an' ef you aint found it out you are gwine ter."

Miss Marbury waved her hand signifying she had heard enough, and said very gently: "I haven't met the kind that I was seeking; but no more for the present. Remember I won't see any more of the colored people except Bishop Gately. I want to see him."

Harriet turned to go, muttering her disapproval. She closed the door behind and went downstairs. Miss Marbury again dropped into a chair near the window and reflected. One thing she was determined upon; not one of the negroes that she had so far received should ever return except Bishop Gately. They might oppose her plans as much as they liked, but it was evident they could not aid her any. As to

Bishop Gately, she was in doubt. She had an aversion to him, but inasmuch as he was bishop it might be that his influence would be essential, and he would have to be retained. She would now take a little time and find out who were the reliable negroes, and seek to interest them. Rising and pacing the floor for a time, she stopped suddenly and exclaimed:

"What is this that Bishop Gately is trying to keep from me, that both Mrs. Ware and Peek have spoken of? He seems to think it very important that I shouldn't know it." Then continuing her pacing, she smiled and reflected aloud: "Humph! He seems to think that I haven't realized there is a division among them based upon the color line. Thinks I am blind. Humph! Before he leaves here to-day I shall twist out of him his real views upon the negro, his ambitions and his aspirations. Keep me in the dark, will he?" Smiling, she again took her seat by the window. So intent was she thinking over this situation that she did not hear the bell ring to a vigorous punch given by Bishop Gately. Having orders to admit him, Harriet ushered him in, and started upstairs to report his presence; but he raised his hands and said in a low tone: "Didn't I see Peek going from here?"

Harriet hesitated a moment before replying, as she did not care to divulge any secret; but thinking she could well afford to admit that Peek had called she answered: "Yes; he's been here. Des lef," and again turned to go; but the Bishop once again stayed her, and asked her very confidentially: "Do you like Peek?"

"Me! No! You know I don't like him. Who do?"

The Bishop laughed and, approaching, said very fatherly: "No; no self-respecting person likes him. He's a low brute."

Harriet whipped that razor from her shoe and brandishing it exclaimed angrily: "You sees dis! I ought ter used it while ago; an' ef he come back here an' says another word out of de way to Mis' Mat it will be his las'!"

From this the wary Bishop perceived that Peek had said something to Miss Marbury to arouse Harriet, and wishing to hear what it was, raised his brows and, looking at her very significantly, said: "Ah, I see, I see. He insulted Miss Marbury. I am not astonished."

Harriet felt that she had said too much, and being naturally secretive, as well as under instructions to repeat nothing Peek had said, felt embarrassed, and attempted to deny it; but her stammering only convinced the Bishop that he had surmised properly. He raised his hands and laughed gently in an effort to make her feel easy.

"Come, come!" exclaimed he, "I am not insisting upon you telling me anything that you don't want to, but, my dear woman, like yourself, I am interested in Miss Marbury and her success; and if Peek said or did anything that was offensive I should like to be apprised of it that I may protect her."

Harriet turned away as though she were going out of the room, but the Bishop called her.

"Don't be afraid of telling me anything, for I never talk except for the good of my friends. I am satisfied that Peek has acted outrageously, and that

Miss Marbury should know his character, otherwise she might get into serious trouble."

"Aint I already tol' her that she's gwine ter get in trouble!" exclaimed Harriet angrily.

"I see, I see!" laughed the Bishop, "that brute has insulted her, and you are indignant yourself. Don't you think I'd better know of it, so that I can advise her?"

Harriet flirted around impatiently as she snapped: "Humph! Ef she gits in trouble I go right straight to Major Sims. He put me here to pectect her; an' I gwine ter do it! Den, too, she's engaged to Mr. Andy Whitfield; to dem I go, fur deh's de one's who can pectect her."

Satisfied now that Peek had made some foul blunder, the Bishop chuckled, thinking that that would dispose of his rival. But desiring to know exactly what it was that he might confront Peek, he continued to urge Harriet, but without avail, for that old woman was not to be cajoled into telling anything. Seeing that she was obdurate, the Bishop cautiously approached her and said in a low whisper:

"I don't believe it would be advisable to tell Major Sims or Mr. Whitfield anything at present, for if Peek said or did anything out of the way you know what it would mean to tell them."

"Deh'd lynch him befo' night!" exclaimed Harriet, brandishing her razor in the air. As she said this who should enter the door but Peek? Hearing a noise behind her, Harriet turned quickly and, observing him, exclaimed angrily: What do you mean, nigger, comin' in dis house widout ringin' de bell, par-

ticular as I tol' you never to make a track in dis house agin?"

The Bishop raised his hands as if asking for silence and, moving toward Peek with a very soft tread, he said in a midnight tone: "I want a word with you alone." Then turning to Harriet he asked if she'd go in the next room. She hesitated, and then slowly walked out, leaving the door open. This the Bishop carefully closed and, turning to Peek, asked:

"You rented Madoc hall did you?" Peek nodded.

"For six months at a hundred dollars a month, eh?" Again Peek nodded.

"Took an option for six months additional?" continued the Bishop.

"What aire you drivin' at?" exclaimed Peek angrily.

The Bishop raised his hands for silence, and continued in a whisper, as he drew a contract from his pocket.

"Peek, I went to see Mr. Draper, and he showed me the contract you made, and here it is. You paid one month in advance, seventy-five dollars, and took an option for twelve months at sixty dollars a month; you have five hundred and twenty-five dollars in your pocket that does not belong to you. Hand it to me."

Peek stood glaring at the Bishop, but realizing that he was entrapped he scarcely knew what to do. Finally he sullenly exclaimed: "It doan belong ter you."

"No, but it will in a few minutes. Hand it to me," replied the Bishop, extending his hand. Peek stood for a moment considering what to do. Finally, smil-

ing in scorn at the Bishop, turned off as he remarked: "You will never git it."

"Peek," began the Bishop solemnly, "you have been here to-day and said something to Miss Marbury that if known would cause you to be lynched before night. Come, give me that money."

Peek denied having said anything to Miss Marbury, and defied the Bishop. The Bishop smiled, confident in his triumph and extended his hand once more and said: "I know what you said, Peek—that money."

"Who tol' you I said anythin' to her?" shouted Peek sullenly. In response the Bishop smiled and extended his hand.

"I said nothin' to Miss Marbury," again declared Peek firmly.

"You did, and I know what it was," replied the Bishop, once more extending his hand.

"Did she tell you?" asked Peek excitedly.

"No, Harriet told me; an' Peek, if I should tell the white people it would not be ten minutes until you would be running for your life. Hand me the money."

"Who's Miss Marbury? Nobody's interested in her!" shouted Peek in defiance.

"She's a white woman, and that's enough!" replied the Bishop, smiling grimly, shoving his hand out.

"She's a Yankee, an' de white people here won't pay any attention to her," replied Peek, feeling confident in his position.

The Bishop smiled in a sardonic way and replied: "They won't, eh? You remember that little Greek

girl? They took up her case, didn't they, and where is Sam Hudson? You hand me the five hundred and twenty-five dollars, Peek, and do it right now!"

"You caint scare me," replied Peek, but the tremor in his voice indicated that he was frightened.

"Peek," continued the Bishop, still smiling, "Miss Marbury was visiting Major Sims, and is engaged to Mr. Andy Whitfield. Hand me that money."

The effect of this declaration changed Peek's manner instantly; but thinking bravado might save him, he turned to the Bishop and exclaimed savagely: "You are lyin'! You caint scare me!"

The Bishop turned away as he said: "Very well, Peek. I go from this room to Major Sims, and with him to Mr. Whitfield's office; and if you are not a dead man before night I'll be very much surprised."

Peek reached his hand into his pocket and pulling out a roll of money said grumly: "I'll give you ha'f."

"No," said the Bishop; "all—every cent."

"Here, take it!" snapped Peek, shoving the money at the Bishop, who took it and put it in his pocket. Then, thinking it best to count it, he took it out and carefully did so.

"It's one hundred dollars short, Peek."

"I spent dat fur dese clothes an' some other things."

"That won't do," responded the Bishop, "your clothes never cost anything like that. Come, out with it all."

Peek pulled out some silver and handed it over as he said humbly: "Dis is all. I've got no mo'."

The Bishop placed the money in his pocket and, smiling triumphantly, waved Peek toward the door.

"Go, Peek; and if you ever appear here again you'll hang."

Like a whipped cur Peek moved toward the door. Reaching it he turned to say something to the Bishop, but as he did his eyes met those of Miss Marbury, who appeared at the door upon the other side of the room, and for a moment the two stood looking at each other. The Bishop, seeing Miss Marbury, smiled blandly and said:

"Peek, there, called, but he has an important engagement, and is going. He left his message for you with me."

Without a word Peek went out.

CHAPTER XXIV

Miss Marbury stood for a moment looking through the door of the hallway listening to Harriet's execration of Peek as she conducted him out. As she heard the door close upon him she turned to the Bishop, whom she found critically surveying her. He smiled in a paternal, indulgent way, and smilingly said:

"My dear Martha,"—then stopping as to see the effect of this familiarity, corrected himself and began—"Miss Marbury, excuse me,"—for he perceived that she was not going to submit to his familiarity—"Peek is not a proper man to come here."

"I know that!" responded she, in a tone that indicated a definite conclusion.

"He is a very undesirable citizen," continued the Bishop, patronizingly. "But he will never come again, as I have told him not to."

Miss Marbury cast a quick glance at the Bishop, for she was not pleased with his air, and replied curtly: "I didn't know that you possessed such control over him."

The Bishop smiled, and took a seat without any invitation, and sprawling vulgarly answered: "I know much of him. Indeed, I know a fact that if told would result in his being lynched before night."

Miss Marbury appeared uneasy as she wondered whether or not Harriet had told him of Peek's conduct.

The Bishop perceived her perplexity, and not want-

ing her to guess the truth, smiled, and continued in his fatherly manner: "I told him to go, and further put him on notice that if he ever came here again I would report that matter to some of my white friends; and as you see, he left. You can feel easy now."

For a moment Miss Marbury remained standing. There was something in the Bishop's manner that was offensive; and not desiring another scene of the like she had had with Peek, she hesitated to take a seat. The Bishop noticed this, and attempted to be very assuring in his manner, and actually motioned her to a seat. She smiled at this and, feeling confident she could protect herself, took a seat some distance from the one the Bishop occupied. As she had to pass a chair in order to do this he observed it, and started to remark about it, but concluded it was better policy not to do so, and smiling upon her began:

"I told you that I'd have to be your counselor. You will find that I am trustworthy in all matters."

Harriet now appeared at the door and seemed quite agitated. Miss Marbury arose quickly, thinking it was Peek, who had returned, and was going to the door herself and inform him that if he attempted to return she would hand him over to the law. She was not going to rely upon the Bishop, nor call up Major Sims. She was going to protect herself. Harriet perceived her agitation, and at once exclaimed: "Des a passel o' nigger women, who 'lows deh wants to *call* on you." She emphasized *call*, and her tone was sarcastic.

"Who are they?" asked Miss Marbury, in a tone indicating a little distress.

"A lot o' black 'uns, an' headed by ol' Sally Coals, who's been in jail more times den she's got fingers an' toes. I tol' 'em yo' warn't here, but whoo! deh 'sputes me. Says yo' is! An' dar deh stan'!"

"I hope you won't receive them," remarked the Bishop quickly.

"I have no intention of doing so," replied she composedly and, turning to Harriet, she directed her to say that she was tired and could not see anyone.

As Harriet started to the door the Bishop smiled and remarked very confidentially: "My dear Miss Marbury, you will find that you will have to select your callers, as all colored people are not desirable by any means."

Miss Marbury returned to her seat, but hesitated to sit down. She felt nervous and thought of excusing herself, but as she wanted to find out what it was that the Bishop was trying to keep from her, and why he should do so, concluded to remain. Then, too, she was mystified by almost everything that had happened since she had taken the house. The first meeting had been anything but what she had calculated upon, and the drove of women who had called during the day had astonished her by their ignorance of social decorum, as well as their assumption. All had seemed to look upon her in a possessory sort of way; she was theirs, and they exhibited a feeling of right, not only to be present, but to do as they pleased. They had strolled over the house as had they been masters instead of visitors, while some had stood in

the corners and gazed at her as though she were a supernatural creature. She had never doubted that she understood fully everything concerning the negro, including his deplorable condition as well as his purposes, nature, and capacity. But her two days' experience had altered this somewhat. Not a single negro from the Bishop down had come up to her expectations. Not only that, she felt there was something about them that she did not comprehend—that their conduct toward her was the outcropping of some sentiment that she did not understand; and that all had treated her in a manner entirely different from that they would have treated a Southern woman. She believed that she could draw the explanation from the Bishop, but realized that she would have to be chary about it. What Mrs. Ware and Peek had told her about his injunctions of secrecy concerning all differences between the blacks indicated what his attitude would be. After hearing Harriet dismiss the expectant visitors, she took a seat and by way of introducing the subject she intended to be the theme of conversation she remarked in somewhat of a hopeless tone:

"The blacks I have met do not seem to be as intelligent or refined as the mulattoes or light-complexioned."

The term "light-complexioned" amused her. Why that should be preferred to the mulatto she couldn't understand, nor could she see why the blacks preferred to be called colored persons instead of negroes. It all seemed funny. The Bishop did not notice her smile over the term "light-complexioned," and not

understanding the object of her inquiry smiled as he thought of her solidarity views and replied jocularly: "You have found that out, eh?"

Miss Marbury laughed gently and, looking at him significantly, replied: "Oh, that was not very difficult."

"I should say not; and the longer you are here the more you will perceive the difference between the colored and the light-complected."

"How do you account for that?" asked she confidently. Misled by her tone of confidence in his ability, and being unappraised of her object he answered very readily. "Why, a strain of Caucasian blood in the light-complected makes them far superior to the negro."

Miss Marbury was not prepared for such a sudden announcement on his part, and, thinking it best to cover her purpose, smiled incredulously and asked: "Isn't that prejudice, Bishop?"

The Bishop laughed jocosely, and his big frame shook with merriment for he thought of her solidarity views again, and responded freely: "My dear Miss Marbury, I know the negro a great deal better than you do."

"Yes," said she, "no doubt of that; and you have expressed your candid view?"

"Yes, yes; that's my candid view; and, my dear Miss Marbury, you will always find me very candid—always."

She smiled inwardly as she realized that she was gaining her point without a struggle. But the Bishop now concluding that he perhaps had said too much,

nodded his head and added: "That question of color we will not go into now. Some time later we will take it up and have a full discussion upon it. It's interesting."

She, however, intended to have it now, and ignoring the after-thought of the Bishop asked inquiringly, and with much innocence of manner: "The negro, though, is capable of enlightenment, don't you think?"

"Oh, yes, indeed; he's capable of great enlightenment; but not in the same degree as the mulatto."

Miss Marbury arched her brows and laughed as though she didn't agree to this, but attributed it to the fact that he was prepossessed in the favor of his own color.

The Bishop laughed as he thought he realized Miss Marbury's point and repeated: "We will talk that over some day."

"Oh, very well," exclaimed she in a tone of indifference. Then looking at him she continued: "But one question. The mulattoes being more intelligent and refined than the blacks, how is it possible for them to associate together as freely as they do socially? I should think they would draw social lines?"

"Well," replied he jocularly, "they are the same race, and are naturally sympathetic."

"They intermarry, and all that?" asked she in a tone of confidence.

"Yes, yes; some," replied he, indicating that he didn't want to pursue the subject any further.

"I suppose, however," continued she, as though asking for information, "the more intelligent and re-

finer mulattoes stick to their own color in marrying as a general thing?"

The Bishop hesitated a moment and then answered as though it were a matter of course: "Yes, naturally; but we'll talk of that phase of the matter some later time. I came on another purpose."

"Very well. Some time I would like to go into it fully, to find out all the different shades drawn between the two classes of the race. Of course there are a great many little differences?"

"Oh, yes; of course there are. The negroes have their social lines, as well as the white people," confessed he.

"I should imagine so. The intelligent and refined seek their kind in all races," replied she, as though generalizing upon the subject. The Bishop assented to this by a mere nod of the head and a grunt in the affirmative.

"You consider the blacks are improving every day in refinement and intelligence, do you not, or are they at a standstill?"

"Oh, they are improving, improving greatly every day," declared he earnestly.

"In your church affiliations you are separate, as I understand it; the mulattoes and the blacks, for the most part, having separate organizations?"

The Bishop laughed and fell back in his chair as he replied: "Who's been talking to you on this subject?"

In a tone of surprise Miss Marbury replied quickly: "Why, information of that sort is common.

Everyone knows there are lines of distinction among the blacks as well as the whites."

The Bishop looked around the room for a moment, and then seeking to change the subject remarked: "I am glad we are rid of Peek."

Miss Marbury did not appear to notice the Bishop's desire to change the subject so suddenly, and laughing very significantly said: "If Peek is the leader of the blacks, they must be a very illiterate set."

The Bishop laughed at this, and remarked in a confident tone: "They are."

Seeking now to draw him out a little further, she concluded she would pretend to wish to meet some of the black leaders other than Peek, and now said to the Bishop: "There must be among the blacks some trustworthy leader. A man who is intelligent and refined. Who is such a man?"

The Bishop twisted in his chair, for this was not agreeable to him. He wanted no rival. Sole counselor was the position he sought, and bent upon being this he replied very frankly: "No; there is no other among the blacks anything like the leader that Peek is. In fact, Miss Marbury, the mulattoes are the leaders of the race—practically constitute it, although much smaller in numbers."

"Then, Peek, you might say, is the chosen leader of the blacks?"

"Yes; he's their leader, and they follow him in politics and in other matters. He is of them, and has more native shrewdness than any of the rest of them."

"Then if he is a fair sample of the intelligence of the blacks, I can't understand how an intelligent, refined mulatto girl could ever marry a black man."

The Bishop laughed as he hesitated to reply to this, but seeing that Miss Marbury waited he finally said: "There are not many intermarriages between the light-complected and colored."

"But how can there be any?" exclaimed she, as though astonished at the idea of any marriages whatever between them.

Off guard, the Bishop replied as though defending his set: "As I have stated, there are not many such marriages; and those that occur are among a class of mulattoes who are ignorant and without any ambition."

"Ambition, what could he mean?" mused she; but afraid to ask, she in a tone of reflection and in a manner almost a monologue remarked: "The mulattoes have risen so much higher in intelligence, under the same conditions, than the blacks that I suppose it can only be accounted for by the strain of Caucasian blood in their veins."

The Bishop made no reply to this, but sat considering why she insisted in talking upon this subject. Miss Marbury looked toward him and perceiving that he was reflecting, asked directly: "That's your opinion, no doubt?"

Looking up at her he answered boldly enough: "Yes; there can be no doubt of that fact."

"Do the blacks realize this?" quickly asked she.

"Some few of them do; but the mass do not, and charge us with pride in our color."

"And you have it," laughingly exclaimed she.

"Between us, yes," asserted the Bishop, and then continued confidently: "Of course we have; but, my dear, this is a matter we must guard very cautiously."

"I see," responded she, as though assenting to this injunction of caution; and continued: "Your position, then, on this subject has aroused the blacks?"

"Yes; somewhat," responded he, smiling and arching his brows significantly.

"And as they become more intelligent it is going to arouse them still more," asserted she, as though in full sympathy with the Bishop's position; and then artfully continued: "As the mulattoes are only about one-third of the blacks, how will you continue to dominate, when they gain more intelligence?"

"We are gaining at the same time they are; and will always be ahead in intelligence; then being far superior, we'll ever dominate."

"And intermarriages between you will become less and less as this feature arises," remarked she sympathetically and approvingly.

"Yes," responded he, casting aside all further caution, as she seemed to sympathize with the mulattoes. "Yes; a mulatto will never consent to return to the black fold. He desires to ascend, not to descend."

"Do you think," asked she, now in a tone of full confidence, "the whites will ever overcome their prejudices against the strain of African in the mulatto, and consent to intermarry?"

The Bishop laughed jovially, and looking at her asked: "What is your view on that subject?"

She smiled as though they were exchanging confidences and replied: "Well, you know in the North, as well as in the West, such marriages occur now, occasionally."

"Oh, yes, yes; I know that. But it will be a long time before that will occur South. The law is against it here, you know," said the Bishop as he glanced at her, now fully confident that they understood each other.

"Of course, in the South, if it ever shall come, it will be a long time off," remarked she, as though reflecting seriously upon the question, but was really nursing her astonishment over what she was extracting from the Bishop.

"Yes, it will be a long time coming, but I have hopes that it will come. In fact, miscegenation is the solution of the negro problem in this country."

She was amazed at this statement. The Major and Andy had always asserted that the negro at heart desired intermarriage with the whites as the chief aim of life, and here was the Bishop substantiating the fact by stating that it was the only solution of the problem. Determined to proceed a little further, she continued her tone of sympathy for his views, and replied:

"Yes; I know a great many thinkers who assert that miscegenation is the only solution of the negro problem. I read some time ago a statement from Professor Smith, who had made a great study of the subject, and he asserts that the negro is incapable of great progress; and stated further that unless the

negro becomes Caucasian in blood he would be unable to keep pace with the stronger races."

"That is undoubtedly true!" exclaimed the Bishop earnestly. "The negro is the lowest order of all races. The Caucasian is the highest; the Mongolian is the second; the African being, in my opinion, lower than the American Indian or the Malay."

She could hardly repress her surprise, but bent now on knowing his views fully, she continued:

"You think that is due to natural inferiority, not to conditions?"

"The conditions of all races were originally the same. All have arisen through inherent ability except the African, which still is barbaric, and always will be. There are fundamental reasons for this. The African is not only temperamentally different, but the structure and quality of his brain is inferior to the Caucasian. His skull is thick and the sutures of his cranium close in early youth, like that of the ape, monkey, and imbeciles, while in the Caucasian they do not close till late in life. The Caucasian's brain therefore continues to grow in both weight and size until far past middle life, while the African ceases to grow before manhood is reached. The African is therefore inferior in brain power to the Caucasian, and while the race may advance it can never be the equal of the Caucasian. The mulatto is a great improvement over the African, both in temperament and in brain power. The strain of Caucasian blood in him makes him a different being from the black African; it links him with the greatest race on earth." Smiling upon Miss

Marbury very significantly, he continued: "So, Miss Marbury, you can see why I insisted that you postpone your endeavor to bring about the solidarity of the colored race."

She made no immediate reply, but seemed absorbed in thought. She was doing this for effect. The Bishop sat and looked at her, considering that he had expressed views that she had never heard before and was proud of himself. Finally, lifting those clear eyes to his face, she said very calmly, and in a tone indicating that she had great regard for what he said:

"Then you think the solidarity of the negro race in America can never be brought about?"

He laughed lightly and in a confident tone replied: "No, my dear madam; it is an impossibility. The strain of Caucasian blood gives us that same pride of race that the Caucasian has. We are no longer Africans." Still smiling, and his eyes twinkling, he continued with an air of complacency: "The strain of Caucasian blood has made me what I am, and to think of allowing my descendants to return to the benighted black fold is unthinkable. Solidarity is a myth. You must realize this and proceed along your lines for the uplifting of the colored race with the understanding that the mulatto is to be your standby in elevating the negroes in America."

Miss Marbury was very solemn and remained silent for a time, then asked very demurely:

"If solidarity is impossible, the division of the colored race in American will widen with time, for

you mulattoes, being proud of the Caucasian strain, will seek alliance with the Caucasian race, and the negro will be left to himself."

The Bishop made no response, as he did not feel called upon to further express his views. Realizing that he was not going to further declare himself, Miss Marbury asked:

"What, then, is to be the final destiny of the negro himself in this country?"

"Well," began he slowly, "as the struggle for life grows harder, as it is doing in all countries, with the disposition of the whites to favor their own blood in all business matters, and in all other relations of life, the negro will find it more and more difficult to live; and will perhaps finally, like the Indian, pass from existence. That is the history of all weaker races."

Miss Marbury remained silent reflecting over what a leader of the negroes thought of the future of his race.

The Bishop continued: "That is to be the destiny of the negro unless he is saved by intermarriage with the white race. As I put it, it is miscegenation, colonization, or extermination."

The Bishop said this strongly, for he believed what he said, and had frequently so expressed himself to men of his own race. His manner of telling the facts, as well as the sentiments of his people,—referring to history to sustain him,—produced an effect upon Miss Marbury that exceeded any she had ever received upon this line. The Major and Andy both had dilated upon these things to her, and she

had also read that the South claimed that the negro's greatest ambition was social equality with the whites, and arguing if this should ever be accorded, even in the slightest degree, that intermarriage of the races would inevitably follow. She had always regarded this as prejudice on the part of the Southern people, and an excuse for failing to accord to the negro all the rights of equal citizenship. But here was the Bishop boldly proclaiming that this very thing was the ambition of the negro race, and justified it. Not only he, but all whom she had met, in their manners toward her, had clearly demonstrated it. She was greatly aroused, and for the first time the negro problem was presenting itself in the light that would have been impossible a few days before. She was now in Egypt, and instead of seeing the pictures of the pyramids, she looked upon them themselves, and felt, as the Major had said, that around them hung the traditions of a race, the inspiration of the people. Determined, however, to sound the Bishop to the bottom, and know the full truth of every phase of the problem, she put another question to him:

"Does the negro desire intermarriage with the whites?"

The Bishop laughed, and feeling now perfectly free to express himself fully replied: "Do they? Humph! why shouldn't they?"

"It is natural that they should prefer their own color to that of other races," replied she argumentatively.

"Not at all, not at all," responded he, chuckling in the pride of his wisdom. "A white woman is

more attractive in every way that a black woman or mulatto, naturally so, and of course every man, whether mulatto or black, is delighted with the thought of marrying her. In time, when the mulattoes accumulate property, they will acquire a higher social standing and will be sought in marriage by the less fortunate whites. The barrier will then be torn down in all sections in this country—even in the South. It may require centuries,” continued he, as he saw Miss Marbury reflecting, “but I feel sure that it is coming. In fact, all thinking people realize that it is bound to come, if the two races remain upon this continent together.”

“Miss Marbury was quiet for some time, seriously reflecting over this statement of the Bishop. While she did not think highly of the dignitary’s character, she realized that he was one of the strong men of his race, and was expressing its sentiments candidly. At times she, too, had thought of miscegenation as the solution of the problem, and that the country had nothing to fear in its coming; but the more she had reflected about its results, the incapacity of a mongrel race, and the little the world owed such a fusion of blood, she reached the conclusion that this settlement of the problem was vicious, and in the end would greatly affect the American people. The nation would be looked upon as mongrel, and the disdain belonging to that condition would attach to all the people. Her pride in her own blood, and desire to see it retain its purity, arose in protest against any such solution. Raising her eyes to the

Bishop's face she inquired, in a tone of much seriousness:

"Bishop, would it not be better to colonize the negroes than to bring about a solution by a mixture of bloods?"

"No, I think not; in fact, colonization is impossible. I attempted for years to bring about the colonization of the negroes, but I got no sort of support from them in the matter. They will not leave this country, preferring to remain here, even as a servant race, than to blazing their own way in an unknown land. This fact alone shows them to be of an inferior race. Do you suppose your old Puritan ancestors would submit a moment to be a servant race to any other? Never! They would seek a wilderness in the tropics first."

"Yes, they would do that," assented she solemnly. Considering for a moment the graveness of the issue now presented to her, she continued, in a tone of soliloquy:

"I do not think well of miscegenation. In fact, I am opposed to it."

"There is nothing to fear," the Bishop interrupted confidently, raising his hands, "for in time the blacks will be completely absorbed—not a vestige of the race remaining. True, it might take hundreds of years, perhaps a thousand, but the negro race would pass out completely."

"That is mere speculation, Bishop," replied she decidedly. "There are ten million negroes or more in this country, and their intermarriage with the whites would produce a mongrel nation almost at

once; and that time would eradicate all differences I deem utterly impossible. This country would become mongrel in blood and despised of all other nations in the world."

The Bishop laughed jocosely as he exclaimed: "Oh, my! You exaggerate the situation."

"Not a bit! Not a bit!" exclaimed she, with spirit.

"Well," began the Bishop smiling in his vanity, "whether my views are correct or not is a matter we've little to do with, as it will take hundreds of years to demonstrate it." He seemed to feel at perfect ease over the situation.

"Therein lies the danger!" exclaimed she, arching her brows and glancing at him significantly.

"Danger! danger!" said he, as though it were a joke; "there is no danger; for it is likely God's plan to settle the negro question just that way."

"I can't believe it," declared she strenuously. "If God wanted a mongrel race he would have had it in the beginning. If that is to be the solution, it will be man's work and not God's. I don't believe it was God's work bringing the negroes here as slaves, as some assert, for the purpose of educating them. If it were his purpose, they would now return to Africa to civilize their brothers there. But as you say, they won't go; they care nothing for their home country and their brothers over there. They prefer to remain here as a servant race rather than to returning and govern a country of their own."

"In any event," replied the Bishop, smiling, "it will not effect New England very much."

This appeal to the sectional view of the problem incensed her, for she was in no sense a narrow or sectional woman upon an issue that affected her country; and now exclaimed in a reproving tone: "I am patriotic enough, Bishop, to love every section of this land; it is my country, my countrymen!"

The Bishop laughed gently and bowing his head once or twice, as in deference to her patriotic expression, replied apologetically, as it was beginning to dawn upon him that he had made a very serious mistake in going into the subject. "Well, all we can do is to act best for both races, and let time settle the result."

"I cannot subscribe to that," said she, in a tone of decision. "I am opposed to doing anything that is wrong and waiting for time to correct it. It is our duty to do what is right, and let time confirm that. Bishop, you have given me a light upon this subject that I have received from no other source. The white people of the South have always asserted that a negro's greatest ambition was to be able to associate with, and finally, marry into the white race. I have never believed that; but you have confessed to-day that it's true. Not only true, but that it is right, and God's will."

From her manner, which had changed suddenly from the quiet, reflective attitude to one of aggressive boldness, the Bishop realized that he had made a fatal error, and at once sought to retract all he

had stated, by claiming that, after all, no one knew what the solution of the negro problem would be. It was at least mere individual opinion.

"But," exclaimed she intently, "if the negro himself desires to surrender his own race, to be absorbed by another, it is unworthy, and should not receive the support of the race which is expected to absorb it. If educating and refining the negro is paving the way for his absorption by the people of my country, then I know that I am doing wrong! wrong!"

The Bishop made no response, except to smile and chuckle, as though he were amused. She had not liked him from the start, and now as she looked at him he appeared more gross and repulsive.

"I was anxious," continued she sternly, with opalescent eyes glowing, "to see the negroes refined and made worthy of full citizenship in this country; but if it's to be done for the purpose of final miscegenation with the whites, then I am committing a crime greater than the treason of Benedict Arnold!" She declared this with force; with conviction; every feature of that strongly marked face speaking.

The Bishop raised his big hands in protest and began to ridicule her opinion.

"Oh, my! My dear Miss Marbury, you don't realize what you are saying, surely."

"But I do! I do!" declared she strenuously.

"My Savior!" shouted he. "Why, think, sister, of what you are saying! Certainly you are chosen by the Lord for the great purpose, and He will not allow you to say that! No! No! Never!"

Miss Marbury was now thoroughly excited, and her features were all aflame. "I believe in Providence, Bishop Gately, but I hardly accord you the right to interpret His purpose," said she curtly.

He realized that he had blundered egregiously, and now in an effort to regain his lost ground, and ignoring her rebuke, raised both hands heavenward and exclaimed, as though in prayer:

"O Father in heaven, come and aid thy servant. He has stumbled and put thy people into trouble. Come, O Lord, and give him the power to open the mind of this divinely appointed agent."

As he concluded Miss Marbury smiled sarcastically and said: "I am too practical for that, Bishop!"

But the Bishop was not to be put aside lightly and, believing that she could be influenced, he once more looked toward heaven and raising those hands called solemnly: "Aid me, O Lord!"

Miss Marbury smiled as she arose and stood looking at him, realizing the hypocrite that he was.

The Bishop, seeing that he was about to fail, took a new tack. He would now intimidate her, as he had not yet realized the mettle of the woman. Rising and advancing toward her, he exclaimed gruffly:

"You are not going to give up your undertaking; you can't! You hear; you can't!"

"Ah, indeed," replied she, as she elevated her brow and smiled undauntedly.

"No, you can't! You have gone into this thing and the people look to me to see it carried out."

"They will be disappointed, Bishop, for I'm not going to proceed any further."

"You shall, I tell you. You have compromised yourself, and you can't retreat now," declared he menacingly.

"Compromised myself!" repeated she inquiringly and with astonishment.

"Yes; you have received negroes socially, entertained them in your house as equals; and now you have got to go on."

She tossed her head and smiled in defiance of this threat.

Advancing a step he continued, as he leered at her: "Your conduct known in this community, what will Mr. Whitfield say? What will Major Sims say? What will all say?"

For a moment she stood looking at him with indignation mounting every feature of her refined, sensitive face. In a twinkling it became a thundercloud, and she raised her hand and pointed to the door. A command for him to go. But the Bishop was not ready to go yet, not he. He, too, had courage, to say nothing of persistence; and now very calmly began to threaten her in another manner—one he had held in reserve.

"Not only have you received negroes socially in your home, but you have received Peek alone, and—and——"

He did not finish his sentence, but stood looking at her with an insinuating smile crawling over that big, sensuous face.

She understood what he meant, and realized now

that he would stoop to any villainy to accomplish his purpose. Her heart gave a pump and then ceased to beat. Harriet had told him what Peek had said, had deserted her and joined with the Bishop, and would agree to any vile calumny he might conjure up. She had heard that negroes were clannish, and in moments of trouble would stand together as one. For a moment her resolution, which up to this hour had never faltered, that had been as firm as the rock of Gibraltar itself, began to waver. The wily Bishop perceived this, and now a sardonic smile covered that face as he said confidently:

"Contribute two hundred thousand dollars for me to carry out your plans and all will be well; refuse and God help you."

When the Titans were overcome by the gods of Olympus they returned to the earth, the touch of which renewed their strength. Now this proposition of the Bishop uncovered his purpose, disclosed the object of his villainy, and now that courage that had been stowed in her veins since the dawn of the race came rushing as a current, and not the thunders of ancient Sinai nor its power had more effect. Not Caesar, not Hannibal, not Alexander, ever exhibited more bravery in the critical moment of battle than did this lonely woman in her daintiness and beauty. She would now confront Andy, Major Sims, Dorothy, the community, the world and declare the truth, and be believed. With those clear eyes shining as no jewel ever could, she raised her hand and pointed to the door, and from her soft lips came the word "Go!" It burned as it came, for it

was afire with the spirit that made the names of martyrs immortal. Suddenly the Bishop sprang to one side—he had to, for a razor grazed his throat. Old Harriet had sprung at him with all her fury. She had listened to the conversation, and abided her time to enter.

“Come, Harriet, come!” shouted Miss Marbury, “be calm! be calm!”

The Bishop was confused and his usual air of confidence was gone. He, however, seemed to hesitate, when Harriet, brandishing that razor, exclaimed:

“Git! git! I sez; en if yo’ eber cum back here I’ll eider cut yo’ th’oat er tell Major and Mister Andy, en den whar’ll yo’ be? Yo’ en Fos Peek?”

The Bishop slowly moved toward the door, yet was not determined to go. He wanted to smooth things over.

“Here! here! Aint you a-gwine to gi’ Mis’ Mat her money?” shouted Harriet, as she thought of the money the Bishop had forced from Peek.

The Bishop turned and glanced at her contemptuously, but said nothing.

“You aint gwine out’n her’ wid dat money in yo’ pocket. Yo’ hear dat?” exclaimed Harriet, advancing threateningly.

“What money, Harriet?” asked Miss Marbury.

“W’y dat he tuck from Peek.” Turning to the Bishop, she said, “I heerd ev’y word you said; fur when yo’ closed de do’ I knowed sumpen wus up an’ I went to dis udder do’ an’ seed Peek gi’ yo’ de money. Mis’ Mat, he’s got five hund’ed an’

twenty-five dollars, besides a handful of silver, dat Peek gin him, fur Peek didn't pay de rent on dat hall."

The Bishop smiled, reached into his pocket and pulled out the money as he said:

"Miss Marbury, you have a faithful bodyguard. It happened just as she said it did. I have the money, and of course was going to return it to you, but in our excitement over matters I forgot it. I hope you did not think I intended to keep it."

Miss Marbury, making no reply, stood gazing on him in contempt.

The Bishop started toward her with the money in his hand, but she beckoned him to give it to Harriet.

He smiled, in order to appear at ease, and giving the money to Harriet, turned and walked out.

Miss Marbury waited until Harriet returned from escorting him to the door, and then said very softly, and very gently, as Harriet advanced with the money in her hand: "Keep it. It's yours, and you are not half paid."

Harriet was stupefied, and stood looking at Miss Marbury then at the money. Not in all her life had she ever seen that much at one time, and the idea that it was to be hers so astounded her that she stammered, but finally said: "Yo' doan mean to gi' it to me?"

"Yes, Aunt Harriet, you are my friend, true and loyal; and as I say, you are not half paid."

"God bless you, honey!" exclaimed Harriet, rushing toward her and throwing her arms around her.

Miss Marbury didn't resist this manifestation of affection. Releasing her, Harriet stepped back and looking at her and said, laughing:

"Yo' are a-gwine ter quit dis work an' marry Mr. Andy. Dat's de life fur yo'; an' I's gwine ter lib wid yer!"

Miss Marbury smiled, then said decisively: "Pack up; we'll go back to the Major's."

"Bless de Lord!" shouted Harriet as she gripped the money and ran toward the kitchen.

CHAPTER XXV

As Harriet turned to go Miss Marbury dropped into a chair and reflected over all that she had gone through during the last two days. She suffered little from the humiliation of defeat, as she was too much aroused over what she deemed an abyss into which the people of her country were boldly walking. Ceasing to speculate upon this, she turned her thoughts upon herself. She had no doubt of what she should do—return home, and that before Andy came back. It was her opinion that her conduct had been such that when he heard of it his humiliation would be so great that he would turn from her in disgust. She had ignored the sentiments and prejudices of the people, and they could never forgive her. Rising, she paced the floor for some time and finally exclaimed:

“There is but one course for me—to take the first train home, and never see Andy again. Poor Andy! The sound of my name will mortify him throughout life. I’ll be the butt of every joke, and the cause for sneers upon every lip, for years to come; and whenever even the North is mentioned, he will think of me and his heart will quiver.”

By and by Harriet came down and announced that she had finished packing and, going to the telephone, summoned a drayman. Miss Marbury heard, but gave no attention whatever, still reflecting upon Andy’s feelings. As for herself she cared

nothing. She would return home, where she would be sympathized with, although her conclusions upon the negro problem might be derided. For a moment she considered asking Andy to leave his people and his home and go North to live, but instantly she perceived that he would not consent. He loved his people and his home, and there he would remain. Clapping her hands above her head she continued to pace the floor, and by and by exclaimed:

"Yes, yes! There's but one thing to do! Take the first train before he returns. I must never see him again." Turning to the door, she called: "Aunt Harriet, hurry, let's get out of this house."

It was nearly dark as the drayman came up, and Harriet, after assisting in putting the baggage upon the dray, marched across the street to the Major's. Miss Marbury looked around the rooms for a moment and then strode across the street. She saw Harriet and Dick holding a heated conversation, and smiled as she knew it was a battle of words between them. As she reached the porch of the Major's house Harriet came to the door and told her that neither the Major nor Mrs. Sims were at home. Dick, now coming out of the house, having carried her trunks to her room, smiled and said:

"I's mighty glad to see yo' back; an' I know that Major and Mis' Sue will be."

Miss Marbury thanked him and went to her room, taking Harriet with her. Dick returned to his work, and in a few moments the Major came in. Dick informed him that Miss Marbury had come back, trunk and all. The Major looked surprised, and

dropping down upon a rustic seat chuckled. Dick joined in, and finally said: "Ol' Harriet's up dar wid her. I tried to git out of her why deh cum back so soon, but she won't say a word."

"Don't let on that you have told me, for I must have a little fun out of Martha."

Dick nodded his head in assent and turned to his work as Miss Marbury appeared in the doorway. The Major pretended not to see her for a time, but finally looked up and exclaimed with delight: "Ah, I was about to go over and call on you. Come sit down and tell me how you are getting along."

Miss Marbury advanced toward him solemnly, thinking she would break the news of her return. Before she reached him he began, in his bantering style: "Well, I have missed you very much. Come and tell me how you are progressing."

She appeared a little confused and without a word took a seat by him.

"You like all those you have met, eh?" continued he, chuckling, as he looked upon her.

"Yes, yes," replied she indifferently.

"You think you will accomplish your object, no doubt," persisted he, looking toward Dick, who was smiling.

Miss Marbury hesitated a moment and then said with dignity: "That remains to be seen."

"Take your time; take your time; all life's before you, and it's a big question you have tackled." Again he smiled and pitched his eye over at Dick.

"Yes, it is a very large question; in fact, too

large for one individual to attempt," replied she, as she looked off and seemed to reflect.

"You are right. Don't you think you had better give up and come back before Andy returns?" asked he teasingly.

For a time she made no reply, but sat looking seriously upon the ground. She was not thinking of his question, but of Andy. Harriet had now come out and was standing somewhat to the rear of the Major listening to his remarks:

"Come, what you say?" continued the Major, laughing. "Let Dick and Harriet go over and bring your trunks."

Dick looked at Harriet and grinned, while Harriet shook her head indignantly and seemed ready to take up the cudgels for Miss Marbury.

"Have you heard when Andy's coming back?" asked Miss Marbury, ignoring his suggestion.

"No. Didn't he tell you?" inquired the Major significantly.

"He said Wednesday or Thursday."

"Well, let's send over and get the trunks, and we'll have everything as it was before he left; and we'll not let him know anything about it. Go, Dick, you and Harriet, and get the things! Presents and all, for no doubt they gave you presents—or maybe, just sent flowers. How was that?" exclaimed the Major jovially.

Harriet advanced now with arms akimbo, an attitude adopted when she was angry, and now exclaimed, with spirit:

"You know dat she's already cum back! Her

trunks upstairs in her room. Dick tuck 'em dar, an' tol' yo'; an' you's jes havin' yo' fun out'n her!"

"What! Have you come back!" exclaimed the Major, in mock surprise. "Why, Dick, you knew that, and did not tell me all this time?"

Dick turned away and laughed, while Harriet stamped around indignantly.

"Yes; I'm back," said Miss Marbury very solemnly.

The Major laughed, and looking at her exclaimed: "Could stand it but two days, eh?"

"That was just two days too many," replied she, in a tone of deep conviction.

"Harriet," exclaimed the Major, "you enjoyed the performance, didn't you?"

"No, I nuver!" shouted the old woman, shaking her head.

"Ol' Mandy Ware ordered her 'roun' like she owned her," interposed Dick, grinning mockingly at Harriet.

"Yo' stop dat! Yer hear!" exclaimed Harriet, moving toward Dick brandishing her arms.

"Come, we must have a little sport out of this," said the Major, laughing.

"Haven't you already had enough?" asked Miss Marbury, and her voice carried a note calling for consideration. The Major noticed this, and was in doubt whether to continue his fun or to be serious; then thinking it would be better to treat the matter as a joke, laughed as he replied:

"Haven't begun. Two days, what is that doggerel? Born on Monday, christened on Tuesday.

married on Wednesday, died——” He did not finish, as Miss Marbury sprang to her feet and exclaimed: “I am goin’ in.”

He gently caught hold of her and detained her as he continued, laughing: “Tell me some of the others besides Mrs. Ware and the Bishop, whom I saw going in.”

Miss Marbury turned away and made no reply, but Dick, after a moment’s silence, laughed and said: “Ol’ Lil’ Grundy, Tildy Jones——” He got no further, as Harriet darted toward him and he had to move out of her way.

“Lil’ Grundy!” exclaimed Major, laughing; “and Tildy Jones; tuberoses, certainly.”

“Don’t detain me, please. I’m going home. When does the first train leave for Boston?” exclaimed Miss Marbury, a trifle petulantly. The Major continued to hold her arm, laughing, but made no further answer. She then asked Uncle Dick when the trains left.

“I doan know, mum; I nebber rid on ’em,” replied he, smiling.

“Do you know when it goes, Aunt Harriet?”

Harriet turned and looked at her and stood for a moment considering, then replied solemnly: “Deh doan none o’ ’em go to Bos’on; deh jes go into Car’liny, an’ down into Alabam’.”

Mrs. Sims now entered from the street and, hearing of Miss Marbury’s return, sprang toward her and folded her in her arms exclaiming: “Oh, dear, dear! I haven’t been able to sleep since you left.”

The Major renewed his badinage, but Mrs. Sims

would not allow it; and putting her arms around Miss Marbury's waist insisted that she go with her. But as the Major promised to tease her no more, she resumed her seat, and Mrs. Sims also remained. Miss Marbury now related her experiences in part, and expressed her change of views, concluding it with a statement that she intended to return home before Andy could get back. Mrs. Sims was sympathetic, realizing why she should want to go, but the Major would not have it.

"It was but a joke, Martha, nothing but a joke, and Andy will so treat it; so will everybody."

Miss Marbury shook her head and her voice trembled as she replied:

"It is too serious a matter to be a joke. I have ignored your sentiments and prejudices, and the people here will be right to make me pay the penalty. Andy never can have the same regard for me, and I would be a subject of ridicule for all time. I must go home, and I shall go in the morning."

Mrs. Sims joined the Major to induce her to remain, at least until Andy came, insisting that she give him the opportunity of deciding for himself instead of deciding for him. Miss Marbury, however, was not content with this view. It looked like a lack of independence on her part—throwing herself upon his mercy, which she could not think of doing. Now and then the Major could not restrain a chuckle as he would think of Mandy Ware's puckering her lips as she attempted to kiss Miss Marbury, and over the tea, which he called the Yellow

Tea, on account of the mulattoes being present. After talking matters over for some time, and Miss Marbury having positively determined to take the train next morning, Mrs. Sims arose and went into the house, leaving Miss Marbury and the Major alone. He did not consent to her arrangements about going home, and determined, if he could, to frustrate them. She now grew very serious, and turning to him said almost tearfully:

“Major, you can’t understand how humiliated I feel. I can never outlive those two days; and when I go home I shall not feel like seeing anybody, much less tell my experience.”

The Major arose and paced the grass in front of them and finally turning to her said:

“Martha, we all have our failures; I have had mine. I once surrendered, after fighting for four years. I can never forget the day a staff officer rode up to my command and said: ‘General Lee has surrendered.’ I had followed him cheerfully, battling for what we all thought was the greatest cause the world has ever brought forth. Going home to my loved ones, there to begin life over again, soon dried up my tears, forgot my sorrow, and in time I looked upon the greatness of my country. I saw the mountains giving up their marble, coal, iron, copper, silver and gold; and saw its ripening fields supplying the world with food and clothing; its factories furnishing the people of the earth with the necessities and arts of living; its flag floating upon every sea; its name honored in every clime—

all happy. Then I felt that I ought to have surrendered,—God had so decreed.”

Miss Marbury looked at him and smiling said: “You make surrender a virtue.”

“Ah,” replied he, laughingly, “life is a struggle in which surrender forms its part.”

CHAPTER XXVI

The Major had just given expression to his epigram of finality, when footsteps were heard and Andy stepped from the sidewalk into the yard, but not in time to hear Major's words. Quickly he advanced and before the Major or Miss Marbury were aware he stood before them and exclaimed gleefully: "I gained my case!"

"Good! Good!" shouted the Major. "You can marry now." Then bending over Miss Marbury he whispered: "Don't tell him anything about you having inherited a fortune. I want to have some fun out of him first."

Miss Marbury did not rise at Andy's approach, but sat looking on him sorrowfully. He noticed it, and, advancing, reached for her hands, and as she did not tender them he took them, and looking into her eyes said eagerly:

"I can buy a new home now, Martha, for my client was so delighted that he doubled my fee. There is now no reason for further delay in our union, so why not soon—indeed, why not this very night?"

"Yes," exclaimed Major, "that's the thing to do; marry right now. I'll send over for Mr. Percival!"

Miss Marbury smiled faintly as she said: "You are in a hurry, Andy."

"Yes, I am. What do you say? Let it be to-night, without any to-do."

Miss Marbury shook her head and replied very solemnly: "No; I can't think of it."

Every woman likes a to-do over her marriage!" exclaimed the Major jovially.

"Certainly; it is the day in a woman's life," replied Miss Marbury, rising. The Major thought it was best now to leave Andy and Miss Marbury together, that they might confer over the situation without him, and making excuses strolled away.

"Martha," began Andy immediately, "you haven't been out of my mind since I left, and even during my argument your name flashed before me. I had never realized to what an extent you had become a part of my life. I wish you felt the same way, and would consent to immediate marriage."

She looked away and then upon the ground. She felt that in a few moments Andy would feel very differently. He stood looking at her, and advancing a few steps reached for her hand and said gently, yet earnestly:

"Come, Martha, there's no reason for delay; set the day, darling."

She now looked up at him and responded very quietly: "Andy, we can never marry."

"Never marry!" exclaimed he. "Why, what do you mean?"

"Oh, I hardly know how to tell you," replied she, showing distress in her manner as well as her voice.

"Tell me what?" excitedly asked he, taking a seat by her.

"Andy," she began, without looking at him, "on Monday morning I took the Dixon house and——"

"Took the Dixon house!"

"Yes; but, Andy, I hardly know how to tell you."

As she hesitated Andy leaned over and looked at her breathing rapidly in her excitement.

"As I had told you, I dropped into a negro church Sunday," continued she, "and met Bishop Gately, the trustees and their wives; and being interested in the elevation of the negro race I invited them to see me."

"They didn't come!" shouted he in a tone that indicated his anger.

"They did, yes; that is, one did, and the Major refused to allow her to enter the house."

"Of course!" exclaimed he scornfully.

"I then rented the Dixon house and received her, as well as a great many more there."

"Received them!" shouted he, astounded.

"Yes; they came several times."

"Who were they?" demanded he.

"Mrs. Ware and——"

Quickly he interrupted, exclaiming in disgust: "Mrs. Ware! That brazen hussy!"

Not noticing his remark she went on with her story: "Mrs. Ware, Bishop Gately——"

Again Andy interrupted. "Bishop Gately!" shot from his mouth in great disgust, as he turned his face away from her.

"Yes; Bishop Gately and Mrs. Vinie Beck, Mrs. Tildy Jones, and, Oh, many others."

"Tildy Jones. My God! Why, Martha, she's a jailbird! The most infamous character of all the Darktown gang."

"Yes; I discovered that later."

"Did you receive any other men besides Bishop Gately?"

"Yes; one other."

"Who?" demanded he fiercely.

"Why, Foster Peek," replied she, hesitatingly.

"Foster Peek! Great God, Martha! Foster Peek and Tildy Jones, the very worst in this town; and you received them?"

"Yes; they came. I didn't know either one, and both came without any invitation from the Bishop, whom I instructed to invite certain ones that I might talk over their condition."

"Did you see Foster Peek alone?"

"Yes; once."

"Was he impertinent?"

For a moment Miss Marbury hesitated, and finally said: "No."

At this Andy began to walk up and down, finally turning to her said harshly: "I believe he was! He's an infamous brute, a beast! What did he say to you?"

Harriet, who had approached unseen by either, now interrupted: "I wus dar, Mr. Andy, protecting her; and dat Fos Peek knowed it. He kep' his distance."

Andy looked at her for a moment, and then snapped: "You knew what sort of a brute he was! Why did you admit him?"

Harriet hesitated a moment, and then replied: "I didn't know but what she had axed him, and I let him in, but I tell yo' I wus wid her right dar day an' night."

"Night!" exclaimed Andy, in astonishment. "You didn't stay there at night?"

"Yes; two nights," replied Miss Marbury demurely.

"It's all right; you needn't kick up no fuss about it!" exclaimed Harriet angrily.

"Martha, this thing must stop right now! Harriet, go and pack up her things and bring them over here."

"We've fotch everything back!" exclaimed Harriet, in a tone that indicated everything was concluded.

Andy dropped his eye upon Miss Marbury, who sat as one depressed, looking upon the ground. "You've discovered your mistake and returned, is that it, Martha?" said he kindly.

"Yes; I made a mistake, discovered it and have returned here."

"You might have known better than to have done such a thing? Why couldn't you wait until I returned?"

For a moment there was silence, then looking at Andy she replied: "I knew you would oppose it, Andy, and felt convinced that I was called to undertake the uplifting of the negro race."

Striding up and down for a moment, Andy was too disturbed to speak. Harriet stood with her arms akimbo, looking at him as a tigress would, expecting to attack. Finally, stopping in front of Miss Marbury he exclaimed in a tone of disgust: "Holding a negro reception!"

Before Miss Marbury could answer, if she in-

tended to, Harriet exclaimed: "I knowed she wus gwine ter git in troubl'; but it's all ober now, Mr. Andy, an' you aint got no right to talk to her in any sich way!"

"What trouble did you have? Did that Foster Peek say or do anything he should not?" demanded Andy of Harriet. Harriet stammered, as she was in doubt what to answer.

Miss Marbury intervened in a tone of calmness: "No, Andy, nothing further than his natural coarseness. He appalled me.

"What convinced you so suddenly of your mistake, then?" demanded Andy, still unsatisfied.

"Why," began Miss Marbury falteringly, "I perceived that I was wrong."

"But something must have occurred, something unusual. What was it?"

"No, nothing unusual; I just discovered that the negro problem rests with the negro themselves, and that interference from the outside is a great mistake."

"Anybody could have told you that!" exclaimed Andy, still thinking something had occurred that he should know.

"Yes; but I was not convinced. I see now the negro aspires not only to social equality, but to miscegenation with the whites as his final hope."

"I don't see how you found that out so quickly—they all deny it," said Andy, in a tone of inquiry.

"It cropped out at the first meeting, and finally Bishop Gately squarely admitted it, and justified it."

"Meeting!" shouted Andy, "what did you do at it?"

Miss Marbury hesitated, but finally said in a crestfallen manner: "I served tea and cakes."

"Great God! Held a negro reception at which you served tea and cakes!" Silence followed. Andy then turned and strode up and down a few times and Miss Marbury continued:

"Yes; I did it to relieve any formality, but discovered it was a mistake. They looked upon it as a social matter, and presumed at once upon it."

"It was a social function! A reception!"

"I didn't so intend it," said Miss Marbury, with dignity.

"But that's what it was!" continued Andy impatiently.

"Yes; I suppose all here will look at it that way."

"No, deh won't!" shouted Harriet. "Everybody here will know dat she never intended to 'low niggers to come to see her like white folks!"

Neither Andy nor Miss Marbury replied to that for a time; then Miss Marbury raised her head and said deliberately: "Yes; I think everybody here will think I intended it; and I am going home."

Mr. Draper now appeared from the street and, realizing that he was intruding upon a very serious scene, apologized for appearing and started away.

"What is it, Draper?" asked Andy.

Draper stopped and looking at him and then at Miss Marbury, saying apologetically: "I came by to speak to Miss Marbury; but perhaps I better postpone what I came for to some other time."

"If it is important you better speak now, Mr. Draper, for I leave in the morning."

"Why, no, it's not so important; I just thought I'd drop by and see you about that lot for your assembly hall."

"Assembly hall!" repeated Andy in astonishment. "What's that?"

Before Draper could reply Miss Marbury responded: "Mr. Draper, that matter has been dropped."

"So Bishop Gately told me, as he returned the papers made between me and Peek, for the Modac Hall."

"Modac Hall! What in the world, Martha, were you doing?" said Andy excitedly.

Draper drew from his pocket his contract with Peek and also Miss Marbury's statement of her plans, and, presenting them, explained: "Miss Marbury had a plan for the improvement of the negro race which seemed to me a very practical thing; and I was sorry to know that she is about to give it up."

"Let's see it," said Andy, taking the papers and glancing over it as well as he could by the fading light.

"It's useless to discuss it, Mr. Draper," said Miss Marbury, "I am through with the whole matter."

Andy had now completed reading Miss Marbury's plan, and looking at her asked: "Is this what you started to do?"

She glanced at him and nodded her head.

"What are you talking about now!" exclaimed the Major, coming up, followed by Mrs. Sims and

Dorothy, who had some time previously gone in at a side door. Andy handed Miss Marbury's plan over to the Major, who, being unable to read it, called upon Dorothy to do so. Dorothy complied, whereupon the Major exclaimed:

"Why, that is not a bad thing! The only difficulty being a practical way to carry it out. Then it would cost a lot of money."

Miss Marbury now, for the first time since Andy arrived, felt confidence in herself, and lifting her head she looked at the Major and said very deliberately:

"You are wrong, Major; all of you are wrong; that plan is not only useless, but I don't know but what it is vicious. I feel it to be, as I am now convinced that educating and refining the negro in its finality leads to the miscegenation of the races. That is the hope of the negro. Bishop Gately admitted it, and justified it. And I think you people are making a great mistake—one that generations will have to suffer for. Indeed, in hundreds of years it will make our country a mongrel race, despised of all nations. I am convinced now that the only settlement of the negro problem lies in colonization; and that should be taken up at once by the negro, as well as all of us, and settled forever. It is the only way; and we owe it to ourselves as a people to do so. Any other plan is temporary and mischievous; procrastination is folly."

Dorothy advanced to Miss Marbury, and gently and sweetly said:

"Martha, I have done you a great injustice, and

I apologize. You've got the true view, that none have the courage to express. We are dallying with this race matter. The time is coming when it will be beyond control, and our country will become a mongrel race, just as you say. There is no escape from it."

"Come! come!" exclaimed the Major jovially. "There is no use in drawing that conclusion in a few minutes. I don't know what's to be the outcome, but if it's miscegenation, finally, I fear for the life of this nation, for it must needs deteriorate and become subject to the pure white races of other lands.

"Martha," said Andy as he walked up to her, "if I was harsh to you just now, upon hearing what you had done—forgive me. Your written statement will forever clear you of any charge of having attempted to bring about social equality, and your conduct will soon be understood. Many think the view you now have is right, but, as Dorothy says, none of us have the courage to speak out against the remainder of the country and assert it. We have been waiting on time as the true solution; have been aiding the negro; and looking on at his advancement with satisfaction; but I don't know but what your convictions are absolutely correct, and that we are making a mistake that generations will suffer for."

"Well," began the Major in his jovial way, "we'll not undertake to settle that question to-night. It will afford quite a theme for discussion hereafter. Let's go in now and have dinner. I haven't had my julep yet, and I know Andy's thirsty. Come,

Draper, you must dine with us, and take Dorothy there over on the porch behind that banana tree, and don't leave her until she has concluded to marry you."

Dorothy replied quickly, with her face beaming with happiness: "I have already done that."

"What!" exclaimed the Major, joyously extending both hands and advancing toward her.

"Yes, we're to be married."

Draper was standing by smiling, and all looked on at the scene. Andy turned to Miss Marbury and said pleasantly:

"Come, Martha, agree now to marry me right away."

She was embarrassed and replied timidly: "I think a girl ought to be at home when she accepts her lover and names the day for her marriage."

Dorothy advanced quickly and said with all her graciousness: "Martha, I hope you will take brother. You're the only woman he ever loved, and he'll make you a good husband. I am happy and I want to see him happy."

Without more ado the two women embraced each other. All stood and looked on, and the smiles that had been upon their faces gave way to solemnity. While all were happy over the scene, the embrace of these two remarkable women was concluding the struggle that none thought would ever end. The Major now turned to Andy and said:

"I must tell you something that may interfere with the marriage."

"What's that?" exclaimed Andy drolly.

The Major laughed and looked at Martha, who now, understanding what he was about to say, turned off as she said: "Major, I don't believe I would say anything about it now."

"But I will, I will! Martha is a great heiress. She had an old great-uncle, who died out West, leaving her ten millions of dollars!"

Andy turned suddenly and looked at Martha, and exclaimed: "What! Why, you have never said anything about that to me."

"Oh, the Major's joking!" exclaimed Dorothy facetiously.

"But, I'm not joking, no! It is the truth!"

"Yes," said Miss Marbury, smiling, "it is the truth. A great-uncle whom I had not heard of in years, and supposed was long since dead, died in the Far West, and bequeathed me ten million dollars."

"Great Granny! What a burden that will be, Andy, for you to take care of. In fact, I don't think I would undertake it!" exclaimed the Major, with mock gravity.

"Andy, if you let the burden of that wealth frighten you into becoming a serious, self-important looking individual I shall have nothing to do with you," laughingly remarked Mrs. Sims.

"If it does, I'll quit him," said Miss Marbury, smiling.

Andy smiled and, feeling already the importance of this responsibility, responded: "I'll do my best to bear with becoming grace this great burden."

Old Dick now appeared with a tray, upon which was a julep for every member of the party, for he

had heard some of the conversation, and realized what it meant. Slowly he walked up to Miss Marbury, and gave her the first julep. She was about to decline, but the Major handed it to her.

"No, no! this is the drink of the South, which you are to join, and if no more than a sip, take it, because in our happiness we always take a drink—at least, we drinking men do. Come up, Draper, you and Dorothy, and drink also to your marriage."

"Bless de Lord!" shouted old Harriet. "What Mis' Mat leaves of hern I am a-gwine ter take, kase I am a-gwine ter lib wid her and Mr. Andy till I dies."

When the drinking was over all retired to the dining-room, and before the evening closed the dates of the marriages had been agreed upon.





... ..

